WORKS IN PROGRESS

VOLUME 10, NUMBER 9 | THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION | JANUARY 2000

"If we are going to achieve a real equality, the U.S. will have to adopt a modified form of socialism."
--Martin Luther King, Jr., Selma, AL Jail, 1965

Police Accountability After The WTO

WIP News Service

Reports continue to emerge in the aftermath of the WTO. They show a pattern of police misconduct not only during the demonstrations but in the treatment of individuals after they were arrested. Work continues for documenting this abuse, and insuring that the City of Seattle will respect 1st Amendment rights and prevent police misconduct in the future. Say no to Police State tactics in Seattle!

Police abuse and draconian conditions inside the jails is an old story in Seattle. Now that we have dealt with the WTO, it's important that we take this opportunity to do some long needed house cleaning here at home. [AND IN OLYMPIA, TOO!]

Forms to report instances of Seattle Police misconduct can be filled out and submitted to the ACLU, the National Lawyers Guild, the City of Seattle, and the WTO historic archive. Instructions and forms can be found at the following address: http://www.infosubway.org/infosubway/wto/index.html

For those who were witnesses to police misconduct during the WTO rallies, there is an online complaint form at the ACLU website where you can fill out a report. It could be incorporated into a possible lawsuit against the city and the police department that is at: http://www.aclu-wa.org

Maddi Keshevarez at maddi@drizzle.com represents the Center for Constitutional Rights and she wants people to become aware of her address as a sort of central organizing location to send copies of statements and accounts.

Report from Sara Luthens on Seattle Police Misconduct

Numerous experiences of torture in the jail were recounted, for example:

- A man with AIDS was denied his medication for 55 hours;
- A woman was beaten so badly that her face was unrecognizable by her mug shot and had to be released;
- Men with long hair (especially dred locks) were lifted off the ground by their hair, left dangling and writhing in pain;
- Our prisoners were beaten on the back of their feet;
- Our prisoners' arms were twisted behind their backs and when up around the shoulder, guards intertwined and twisted their fingers, causing immense pain. In fact, two men passed out from this; and more...

From Ed Mays: Some of the accounts of the techniques that the police used inside Sand Point and local jails don't sound all that dissimilar from Spy Ops tactics employed by US Special Forces, training that Latin American militaries might receive at the School of the Americas, or something you might read in a CIA torture manual.

Chronology of Police Accountability in Olympia

1980s OPD expands in number of officers and operations.

June 1989 In-Custody-Death of Danny Spencer who was beaten and hog-tied by Olympia officers Cliff Maynard and Aldo Fantoni

July 1989 Public demonstration for more accountability of police

Aug. 1989 Inquest held investigating the death of Danny Spencer.

Inquest official finding reveal "positional aspyxiation" as cause.

Death Certificate says "Homicide" as cause of death, but officers not held responsible in his death.

1991 Citizens ask City Council to establish a Civilian Review Board to bring more public accountability to the Olympia Police Department.

Council rejects the idea.

1992 Olympia City Council allows citizens to file complaints against police at City Hall rather than just at Police Department and Assistant City Attorney brought into misconduct investigation process.

1994 Mothers Against Police Harassment (Mothers for Police Accountability) brought from Seattle to Olympia for a presentation.

Work continues for documenting this abuse, and insuring that the City of Seattle will respect 1st Amendment rights and prevent police misconduct in the future.

1995 Review of Olympia Jail ordered resulting in setting up process guidelines for handling inmates

1996 Review of Olympia Police ordered resulting in finding the department borderline dysfunctional. Plan formed to re-organize department, all but leaving out accountability as an issue.

March 1996 Olympia CopWatch established to push for accountability -- organizes public testimony on suffered or witnessed police abuse AND proposes Non-Violent\De-Escalating Training for officers, an Aggressive Hiring and Promotion for Women and People of Color as officers program, adoption of a Community Oriented Policing policy, and establishment of an Independent Civilian Review Board

Feb. 1997 Forum organized by City of Olympia which brought in various experts to testify on structure and organization of police departments.

Accountability is a side issue.

May 1997 Olympia Planning Commission holds public forums to bring OPD under the comprehensive plan and includes accountability as an issue.

May 1997 CopWatch sets up meeting with expert on law-enforcement, Eileen Luna, to discuss issues with Olympia city officials. She says citizen review is good for the city and the police.

Aug. 1997 Gary Michel hired to replace retired Chief John Wurner after 18 years of service with Olympia

1998 $15,000 set aside in the Olympia City budget to conduct a police accountability study.

1999 Request for proposals sent out and proposals received from experts to do a Police Accountability Study, including one by Eileen Luna.

2000 Police Accountability Study will be conducted with a component for public comment.

Next meeting of Olympia Copwatch is Saturday, January 22nd at 2pm in the new Community Organizing Space (in alley across from Orca Books in downtown Olympia) Call WIP to become involved!

SAVE I.T.

Save the Date! Noon Rally on January 10 in Olympia

Make a Fuss to Save Your Bus!

Transit Cuts = More Traffic!

by Alliance for Public Transportation

The service cuts that have been planned at Intercity Transit and other transit agencies around the state will have an unacceptable impact on the lives of transit users by making it difficult or impossible for us to get where we need to go on a daily basis: to work, to school, to grocery stores, to medical facilities, to churches, to libraries, to our friends' and families' homes. Those worst affected will be seniors, people with disabilities, students, and people with a low income. Air quality will decline while global warming, traffic congestion, and accidents will increase.

On February 27th, the following changes in IT's service will take effect:

- **All Sunday Service will cease,**
- **Thirteen routes will be completely eliminated,**
- **Service will be reduced drastically on most routes,**
- **Similar cuts in public transportation will occur across the state.**

Public transit is essential to the health and livelihood of our community. That's why riders and supporters have come together to insist that state and local government restore funding that has been lost as a result of Initiative 695. Funding for public transportation costs the taxpayer a tiny fraction of funding for road construction and other car-related subsidies and that doesn't even include the environmental and social costs of car culture.

Alliance for Public Transportation, Transportation Choices Coalition, along with seniors, people with disabilities, environmentalist, and anyone that rides a bus will go to the

(Continued page 14)

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Works In Progress is a community newspaper sponsored by the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Rainbow Coalition or the Workers In Progress and are solely those of the authors.

Submissions:

Correspondence, articles, art, and photographs are always welcome. Please, when possible, put articles on a 3.5" IBM-compatible disk (text preferred) or via e-mail. Artwork and photos should be camera-ready/black & white.

WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number. Articles may be reprinted. Please cite source.

If you don't see your issue being covered in Works In Progress, it's because you aren't writing about it! (Or aren't finding someone else to cover it!)

Send submissions to Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507-0295, wip@ olywa.net

Back Issues:

Get your catalog of indexed WIPs below. Some back issues are available in the Olympia Timberland Library. WIP is being archived on microfilm by the UW Library.

WORKERS IN PROGRESS

Dave Campbell	Wendy Ortiz
Sebastian Chase	Hali Panneton
Renee Cruickshank	Tara Perkins
Megan Davis	Jeff Sowers
Frank Hoffman	Marie Smith
Teresa Jennings	Sylvia Smith
Jerome Johnson	Chris Stegman
Margaret Love	Pat Tassoni
Evelyn Montague	Alice Zillah

Mission Statement:

"Our aim is to confront injustice and encourage a participatory democracy based on economic, social, and environmental justice. Works In Progress is dedicated to providing a voice for those most affected by the exclusionary and unfair practices that seek to silence the oppressed."

Anti-Discrimination Clause:

We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society, and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

Governing Tool:

The following statement will become part of the Editorial Policy and will be the governing tool for the Anti-Discrimination Clause: *WIP will make every effort to work with the contributor of material considered by WIP to be offensive in order to reach a mutually agreed upon resolution, but WIP reserves the right as a last resort to edit or not print submitted material.*

WIP Schedule

Submission Deadline:

Friday, Jan. 21st

Proofreading Meeting

Monday, January 24th
6:30pm at Olympia Library

Everyone Welcome!

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Send to: Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507

Letters & Briefs

Alcatraz was not a supermax

Dear WIP -

In "Throwing Away the Key" (WIP, 12/99, p.9) Ron Jacobs mentions the rise of "supermax" prisons in the last decade or tow. He says that supermax prisons are "not completely new to the U.S. system -- Alcatraz was a supermax prison in its time.

This is an inaccurate mischaracterization! Yes, Alcatraz was the "toughest" prison in the U.S. during its time. But, still, its prisoners were allowed out of their cells to dine in a communal chow hall, work in industry jobs, attend feature films in the audiorium and walk the yard (or play ball, etc.) during weekends.

Today's "supermax" prisoners are entombed in concrete boxes with solid steel doors -- totally isolated from human contact; their meals are shoved through a food slot; and they spend 23-23 1/2 hours per day alone in their cells -- allowed out only for showers 3-5 times a week or to spend a half hour alone in a tiny outdoor dog cage (often given the choice of "shower or yard"). When being moved to the shower or yard prisoners are handcuffed, shackled, often with a dog leash attached, and are escorted by two "ninja suited" guards carrying batons and electric stun devices.

Alcatraz a "supermax"?? Compared to today's high-tech cathedrals of state inhumanity, Alcatraz was (pardon the expression) a friggin' Country Club.

Dan Pens, Contributing Writer,
Prison Legal News

Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition

WROC's planning and organizing meetings take place the **first Monday of each month from 5:30pm until 8pm at First United Methodist Church**, 5th and Boundary, downtown. WROC's support and information meeting is the third Tuesday of the month at Evergreen Vista Apartments, on the West Side of Olympia. Dinner and free childcare are provided at all meetings, and people can call 352-9716 for more info.

Dance O' Dance

Free Show, Open Invitation, Any Age, Any Style: .... technicians arrive by 6pm, dancers by 7pm... we tape Live in TCTV's studio A, 440 Yauger Way. Reruns on Fridays NOW at 8, but Wednesdays STILL at 4pm. "Dance O' Dance" is in its fourth season on TCTV. Reserve a place by calling 866-4524 or e-mailing justinb@ writeme.com and visit the website www.danceodance.com

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH LEONARD PELTIER

MARCH & RALLY FOR JUSTICE FEBRUARY 5TH (Saturday), 2000, TACOMA, WA
12:00 NOON, MARCH FOR JUSTICE, PORTLAND AVE PARK (On Portland Ave. between E. 34th & E. Fairbanks Ave. Take Portland Ave. exit off I-5 and head East on Portland Ave. March route will go along Portland Ave. to Puyallup Ave. to Pacific Ave. to 17th St.)
1:00 PM RALLY FOR JUSTICE, U.S. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE, 1717 PACIFIC AVE.

February 6th, 2000 will mark the 24th year since Leonard's arrest. Each year Leonard Peltier supporters around the world take part in THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH LEONARD PELTIER marking the date inwhich Leonard begins a new year in prison. This year, because February 6th is a Sunday, the NWLPSN will be have it's annual Tacoma March & Rally For Justice on Saturday February 5th. We are also making plans to hold an honoring meal on February 6th. The February 5th Tacoma March & Rally will also mark the 50th rally that the NWLPSN has helped organize within our region since its founding upon Leonard's request in 1993. We welcome the involvement of all Peltier supporters in any way they can find to help. We are in need of donations to help pay for the expenses of the march and rally. Please send donations to: NWLPSN, OLYMPIA OFFICE, P.O. BOX 4398, TUMWATER, WA 98501.

"Those who put me here and keep me here knowing of my innocence can take

(Continued page 15)

The Capitol Theater in Downtown Olympia

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SOUTH SOUND GREEN PAGES

South Sound's Monthly Environmental Newspaper

Green Pages is a forum for individuals and organizations concerned about the integrity of our environment and the quality of life in our community.

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JANUARY 2000

Year for the Culture of Peace

A Culture of Nonviolence...

...teaches conflict resolution and respect for human rights, both in homes and school;

...promotes racial and economic justice, including the equitable distribution of global resources;

...works for the abolition of nuclear weapons and war;

...nurtures the spiritual roots of nonviolence and compassion in all religions;

...supports diversity and encourages multi-culturalism in all structures of society;

...embraces the sanctity of all living things and values the earth itself.

Source: Fellowship of Reconciliation

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
"A culture of nonviolence values love, compassion and justice. It rejects violence as a means of solving problems. Instead, it embraces communication, cooperative decision-making, and nonviolent conflict resolution. It ensures freedom, security, and equitable relationships. It promotes inner peace, personal transformation, and disarmament." F.O.R.				DECEMBER S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	FEBRUARY S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29	**1** **1781**: Congress issues $191 million valueless by spring **1999**: Euro is launched
2 **1999**: Justice Department reports nation's murder fell in 1997 to 30 year low	**3** **1825**: Robert Owen buys 20,000 acres to create utopian community at New Harmony	**4** **1999**: Jesse Ventura sworn in as governor **1999**: Elizabeth Dole resigns from Red Cross	**5** **1999**: US warplanes fired on Iraqi MiGs testing no-fly zone and missed	**6** **1999**: Brian Baird takes the oath of office as the new representative of the 3rd District	**7** **1997**: 10 member expert panel on the Gulf War Syndrome was not caused by nerve gas	**8** **1998**: Lacey: Charges against 2 dropped; descriptions given by victims didn't match
9 **1964**: Anti-United States demonstrations break out in the Panama Canal Zone	**10** **1965**: Panamanian government severs diplomatic relations with the United States	**11** **1999**: US fighter jets hit 2 Iraqi missile sites **1999**: Starbucks opens outlet store in China	**12** **1912**: Children/adult workers strike to protest wages cut endure clashes with police	**13** **1999**: Brazilian government devaluation of real causes the Dow to drop 125.12 points	**14** **1999**: Sao Paulo stock exchange halts 30 minutes after 10% drop; Dow falls 228 points	**15** **1999**: Brazil continues to devalue the real; the Dow Jones gains 219 points
16 **1786**: The Virginia legislature adopts the Ordinance of Religious Freedom	**17** **1917**: Virgin Islands are bought from Denmark to provide bases to guard Panama Canal	**18** **1999**: Brazil makes decision to permanently float real with promises of tough reforms	**19** **1864**: Arkansas, a Union slaveholding state, adopts new anti-slavery constitution	**20** **1904**: US Marines sent to Dominican Republic to aid government against rebel forces	**21** **1977**: Carter grants unconditional pardon to almost all draft evaders during the Vietnam War	**22** **1999**: Air Force/Army report big increase in gay discharges, most in 1st year of service
23 **1977**: First episode of Roots televised **1999**: US bombs two missile sites in Iraq	**24** **1999**: United States bombs two missile sites in two separate incidents in Iraq	**25** **1999**: US bombs Iraqi residential area killing at least 11; Pentagon claim US jets misfired	**26** **1999**: Montesano: State probation officer is injured when a bomb explodes in his carport	**27** **1992**: Macy's files for bankruptcy due to $3.5 billion debt from 1986 management-led buyout	**28** **1997**: Weyerhauser paper plant chemical spill in Longview stinks up South Sound area	**29** **1999**: OR: Police strip 30 middle school female students looking for stolen items
30 **1999**: NATO authorizes military action in Yugoslavia to assure autonomy for Kosovo	**31** **1999**: Study shows human AIDS virus was passed to humans from chimpanzee sub-species	**On November 10, 1998, the United nations General Assembly responded to an appeal from every living Nobel Peace Laureate by proclaiming the year 2000 to be "The Year for the Culture of Peace" and the years 2001-2010 to be the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World."** The Fellowship of Reconciliation				

Along the Color Line

The Politics of Inequality

Dr. Manning Marable

The fundamental issue that will define U.S. politics in the first decade of the twenty-first century is the spiraling growth of inequality in American life.

One might respond that "inequality" is not new in U.S. society, and has always existed. What is "new" is the degree of income stratificationand class polarization we are now experiencing, which is really unlikeanything since the Robber Barons of the nineteenth century's Gilded Era.

Most Americans know that household income levels are sharply stratified by race. For example, in 1998, the median household income for African Americans was $25, 351, only 60 percent of the median white household income of $42, 439. According to a recent report by United For a Fair Economy, "Shifting Fortunes," the average white household in 1995 had $18,000 in financial wealth (net worth minus equity in owner-occupied housing). By contrast, the average African American household possesseda grand total of two hundred dollars. The typical Hispanic household's financial wealth was zero.

But these statistics don't reveal the growing class stratification thatin many ways cuts across racial boundaries. Alan Wolfe, the director of the Center for Religion and American Public Life, recently observed in the New York Times that "the 1990s will be remembered as a time of Reaganism without Reagan." During the decade, "the incomes of the best-off Americans have risen twice as fast as those of middle-class Americans." Back in 1980, the average top corporate executive's salary was 42 times higher than the median income of a factory worker. By 1998, the top executives were taking home 419 times more than factory workers.

Although Wolfe is not a political progressive, he makes some excellent points about the growing class hostility of most Americans about the wealthy. "The fact that Americans hope to become rich does not mean that they admire the rich," Wolfe states. Corporate executives' salaries, stock options and company perks deeply trouble people "because such rewards have become disconnected from the efforts that go into earning them." The upper one percent of all U.S. households has a greater combined net wealth than the bottom ninety-five percent of allhouseholds.

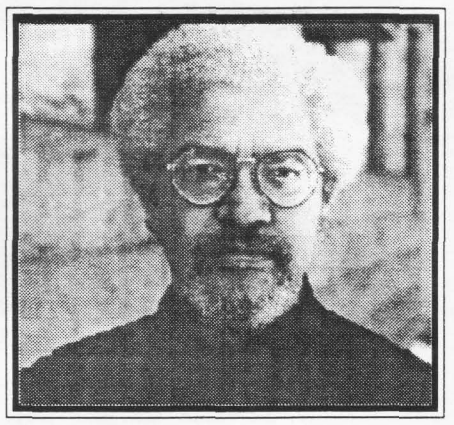
Most working Americans resent all this, because through their practical experiences, they know that they are working harder and for longer hours, but their wages are smaller than a decade ago. Last August, the Economic Policy Institute reported that in 1997, the medianinflation-adjusted earnings of the average worker were 3.1 percent lower than in 1989. Six out of ten U.S. workers earn either the same or less than they did ten years ago. The Economic Policy Institute also notes that the typical married couple family in the U.S. worked a total of 247 more hours in 1996 than in 1989. That is six additional weeks of work for less income.

The other dimension of income and class stratification is what ishappening within the working class itself. There is increasingly atwo-tiered stratification, a growing division between working class households whose incomes have held steady or slightly improved vs. the "working poor," people just above the poverty level but below the income level that would be a "living wage." Since the draconian Welfare Act of 1996, growing numbers of children are being trapped into poverty or near-poverty. In 1996, more than one in five children were poor, up from 16.4 percent in 1979. The Economic Policy Institute also notes that 39.9 percent of all African-American children and 40.3 percent of all Latino children live in poverty today.

The economic crisis for the poor and working poor can be measured incities and states across the country. In New York State, for example, according to a recent study by the Fiscal Policy Institute, the number of New Yorkers in poverty increased by one-third since 1989 to 3 million. Twenty-five percent of the state's children, and 40 percent of the children in New York City, live in poverty. For New York State's working poor, "the median hourly wage fell 6. 3 percent in the 1990s despite a 7.9 percent increase in productivity per worker." The median wages for New York State's black and Latino workers "fell at least one and a half times as much" as for white workers. In New York City, "thenumber of working poor families has jumped by 84 percent in the 1990s, more than three times greater than the U.S. increase." Conversely, the Wall Street bull market has affected only a small number of households. The top seven percent of New York's households, states that FiscalPolicy Institute, "receives 85 percent of all capital gains."

The challenges for black politics and the left is that most liberals and Democrats don't want to talk about class.

The challenges for black politics and the left is that most liberals and Democrats don't want to talk about class. After all, it was Clinton who signed the 1996 Welfare Act. Both political parties, in varyingdegrees, pursue policies that directly contribute to class stratification and the vast concentrations of wealth among the upper two or three percent of all U.S. households. One concrete step we may take to reverse these devastating trends should be to demand an increase and index in the



minimum wage back to its 1968 level, which today would be$7.65 in inflation-adjusted dollars. We should also support the various campaigns for a living wage, which is defined as the amount of money necessary to support a family of four above the poverty level. In thepast five years, living wage initiatives have been approved in 32 cities and counties nationwide, with over 70 other campaigns being waged currently. Some cities have now begun to establish a two-tiered living wage. In Detroit, for instance, jobs with benefits must be offered at aminimum of $8.25 per hour; for jobs without benefits, the living wage mandated is $10.29 per hour. In San Jose, city contractors are required to pay workers at least $9.50 per hour, double the minimum wage.

What does all this mean to the future of black politics? As powerful as race and racism are in determining the life chances of African Americans, the politics of inequality will play a more significant and central role, both inside the black community, and in its relations with other groups. In short, class matters, and the battle for economic fairness will in many respects be the most fundamental factor in the future of African-American politics.

Dr. Manning Marable is Professor of History and Political Science, and the Director of the Institute for Research in African-American Studies, Columbia University. "Along the Color Line" is distributed free of charge to over 325 publications throughout the U.S. and internationally. Dr. Marable's columns are also available on the internet at www.manningmarable.net. •

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WHEN WOULD ENOUGH BE ENOUGH? Some Thoughts About Revolution - Part 4

By Frank Hoffman

Pirsig, in his book, "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance," says something like, "It is not enough to tear down the factories, we must change the thinking that caused them to be built in the first place." Resisting that thinking, changing that thinking, may be where the authentic and just revolution begins and ends. The way of thinking that puts private property at the core of our personal and public values is so pervasive and powerful that it seems impregnable, impossible to dismantle or displace. Often when we try to get outside this way of thinking, we turn back to a simpler time when there were fewer people and fewer goods; more trees and more fish. Thinkers who have tried to look ahead into the future seem to imagine a changed human species, a less selfish, less violent, more generous species. Perhaps the real issue, the real problem, is- how do we create a changed present? A present not organized around private property and global markets.

I have yet to reduce all the images, thoughts and feelings caused in me by the anti-WTO protests into anything coherent. I may never be able to do that. Perhaps, though, what those protests reveal is the permeability of the present. That what seems impregnable is maybe simply large and slow -- its constant motion and change easily outrun. Its technology unimportant to its survival. Its survival probably depends on trust and allegiance, and if those are withdrawn by enough people, the present will change, maybe faster than we imagine. This now seems possible, doesn't it? Maybe still too abstract, but still possible. As we streak into a new century.

If we are able to shed the galaxy of values rotating around the concepts of private property, what values should replace and displace them? How do we identify them? Through what process do we agree on them?

And there always seem to be people who assume they are our leaders. They tell us that is their role by their behavior, by being up front. They present their credentials to us. They wrote a book. They read a book. They went to a series of meetings. They seem to also assume we need to be led. What do we say to them? Is it possible for us to speak and act as one without leaders? If we need leaders, how do we select them? And replace them, if they come to be oppressive toward us?

All of this is about the public. What about the personal? Maybe a joyless person can help create a joyful community. Maybe angry,hate filled people can create a society that includes everybody. And if they can't, how do we deal with that, in the present? Do we dream, imagine, work, to escape reality or to create it? Can you tell the dreamer from the dream?

Up Front

How I Spent WTO Week

Jerome Johnson

Ironically enough, I was working in Seattle during WTO week.

From a journalist's as well as activist's perspective, I really wanted to be in Seattle for the week. I wanted to participate in the peaceful protests, and write about the experience for these pages. I wanted to be able to say, "I was there."

However, in mid-November I'd accepted a new job with a Seattle- based company. I commuted and worked long days, but I still had somehope of attending. I passed up a chance to ride the Labor Party bus,thinking, "I'll just take a break from work, join the marchers at the site, and then go home."

Though the company was a non-profit organization, I was keenly aware of my paradox: I was too busy working to attend a major labor protest.

Things didn't work out that way. The new job was so intense, I was virtually chained to my desk. Though the company was a non-profit organization, I was keenly aware of my paradox: I was too busy workingto attend a major labor protest.

The afternoon of November 30 found me hard at work in the office, preparing payroll for the 29 employees I supervised. Throughout the day I'dlistened to coverage on the radio, in my cubicle, but by 1:30 I was ensconced with a coworker, deep into an unfamiliar payroll procedure. We worked steadily through the next five hours.

The whole time, part of me was with my fellow activists. I wondered how they were doing. It wasn't until I was on the freeway en route home that I heard reports of rioting, tear gas, rubber pellets and violence. I was shocked--and prayerful that my friends were all right.

I drove on, listening. I was surprised and gratified by the incredible restraint shown by the Seattle police. I heard reports of their overreations on Capitol Hill and downtown--but thank God, no one was killed.

And I felt pangs of guilt--"I wish I'd been there"! But I could not leave the payroll and go. Those 29 people depended on me to get paid, and they had children, families and bills--during the holiday season. If I'd left, what could I tell them--"Sorry, you won't be paid because I wanted to attend a big labor protest. Your kids won't eat and your rent won't be paid. Sorry."

If it had been anything else, I would've gone and marched.

I passed through Fife, and Tacoma. I heard reports of black-clad agitators provoking violence, and it made me think. This is not the first time a civil rights demonstration has been disrupted by violent "anarchists" who have nothing to do with the protest in question, but are using the event as a cover to break things, scare people, and riot in their screwy agenda to "Fight Authority." They have no concern except advancing their own violence, and could really care less about the Makah culture, WTO and workers around the world, or any other progressive cause. If they did, they would not use these events to riot and destroy, because if they cared they would know that their efforts are so counterproductive. They're the kind of assholes who would run right up to a riot cop, taunt him/her by rapping on their shield, verbally abuse and refuse to disperse, then self-righteously howl "Police brutality, man!" when the tear gas comes.

I don't, by any means, seek to excuse police abuses. But maybe it'stime for us progressives to start planning for these jerks when weplan our demonstrations. Besides the usual marshals, in the future, we should have a team of people whose sole job is to watch out for these idiots and weed them out if they appear. I've participated inmany demonstrations, and they're too important to be disrupted by a few overgrown spoiled brats who want to break things. If their needto destroy is so great, let them start in their own homes.

I took the off-ramp, went through the tunnel, and turned down Capitol Way. In coming days, I would hear that the WTO conference would collapse because quarreling capitalists couldn't agree. I was gladof this, but my joy was tempered by the fact that in corporate boardrooms and trade ministries around the world, the business of business goes on. To sweatshop workers in Asia, maquiladorados on the Mexico-US border, and farmworkers in American fields, it was just another week.

And yet, as I pulled onto my block and turned off my car, I couldn't hide a secret smile. For my friends and I still boycott Nike, still shop locally, still act globally.

Just like thousands everywhere.

In Washington, DC, Carol Mosely-Braun is sworn in as Ambassador toNew Zealand.

In New York, former NYPD officer James Volpe begins a 35-year sentence for brutalizing Abner Louima.

In California, the indomitable Julia Hill comes down from her two-year battle to save an ancient redwood, flushed with victory over a major logging company.

And in Tumwater, a courageous city council allows unmarried couplesto register as partners. •

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--The Battle of Seattle From Afar

Capitalism Takes A Left to the Jaw

Ron Jacobs

Capitalism... in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom-free trade.--Karl Marx, 1848, The Communist Manifesto

The Battle of Seattle From Afar

As I followed the November 30 (and after) demonstrations from Burlington, VT. via live internet feeds from KING-TV and KGW-TV and reports from the field via the Independent Media Center and personal friends, I wished more and more that I had made the trip. The size, diversity of interests represented, and the militancy of the protests made them some of the most successful popular street actions since the Spring of 1971 in Washington, D.C.. That spring DC saw the Vietnam Veterans Against the War stage its legendary Dewey Canyon III protest, followed by a week of massive antiwar actions called by various left and liberal organizations which were than followed by a massive direct action called by the Mayday Tribe and designed to shut that city down. The police reaction to that attempt was the declaration of martial law and the detention of over 12,000 citizens. They didn't succeed in shutting the city down, but did delay the opening of most of official Washington for several hours.

In Seattle, as most of us know, the anti-WTO protestors achieved something similar, and then some. At the same time, the protests brought the WTO from behind its closed doors and began discussions among the citizenry of the world about this capitalist cabal's true intentions. In my workplace alone, more questions were asked and concerns expressed about the intent of this organization than on any topic since the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia.

For those who work for social justice, that week in Seattle signalled a fundamental turn in our efforts. Every single issue represented recognized and challenged the same enemy: global capitalism. This is the essence of radical--going to the root of the problem. In my understanding of U.S. history, such a fundamental analysis and subsequent action has not occurred on a mass basis since the labor struggles in the early part of the 20th century, especially those organized by the Industrial Workers of the World (who were also present in large numbers in Seattle). This is important because it sweeps aside single-issue movements similar to those of the past twenty years and, in one cataclysmic week, unites labor, environmental acrivists, indigenous people, prisoners rights activists, anti-war folks, and others, including anarchists, into a popular movement against those men and women who have played with the earth as if it were theirs alone for most of the past millennium. Equally important is that this movement is international. The WTO protests in Seattle were just one of a series of anti-capitalist actions that have occurred not only during that week but over the past several years outside of meetings of the International Monetary Fund, the G7 meetings and other summits of the capitalist world's leading movers.

For those who work for social justice, that week in Seattle signalled a fundamental turn in our efforts. Every single issue represented recognized and challenged the same enemy: global capitalism.

What About the Anarchists?

Much of the mainstream media's focus during the demonstrations and immediately afterwards has been on the anarchist groups present in Seattle who attacked downtown Seattle, trashing the windows of banks and other corporate buildings. This media focus has caused many other folks in this movement to focus on the actions of these people as well. While I understand the concern of other organizers, I do not believe it is a major one. The reality of any type of massive nonviolent direct action is that every individual and group interprets direct action in their own way. The folks involved in the trashing did not harm anyone, nor did they hijack the demonstration. According to a variety of sources (including my viewing of a live feed the morning of November 30th and even the New York Times, who is not on the side of the anti-WTO folks), the first attack by the police was way before these folks showed up and was against nonviolent individuals who were preventing delegates from getting to the opening ceremonies through a variety of methods.

When the anarchists intent on trashing corporate buildings did show up, they were joined by any number of other groups and individuals, not all anarchists. Additionally, there were many other anarchists present during the week who did not join in on the trashing. Anarchism, like any other established philosophy, has a number of strains, including the syndicalism of the IWW and the anarchists of the Spanish Revolution, the classic anarchism of Kropotkin and Proudhon, the anarchism of the Mexican revolution as esposed by the Flores-Magnon brothers, the communist anarchism of groups like the Anarchist Black Cross, and the anarchist primitivism of many current American anarchists, including a large percentage of those who base themselves in the Eugene, Oregon area. This strain sees most of industrial and post-industrial society as the problem, with the capitalist system at the root of that society and leftist ideologies as mere capitlaist heresies. This does not mean that they have no critique. Indeed, in their journals, Marx is quoted in their attacks on capitalism and its alienating effects. However, they take the Marxist analysis in another direction and see production and technology as being equal to the inhumanity of the capitalist economy.

The anger expressed in Seattle by these folks and others is the anger we all feel. It is wrong to consider them as an enemy and very important that, should the powers of the state come down on them, they get our support. I, for one, will not abandon them. After all, there is no way that the forces of capital will sit still after what they perceive to be the fiasco of Seattle. Already, the police are blaming the civilian government of Seattle for its handling of the protests, believing not that the police were too repressive, but that they were not repressive enough. The powers that be want to stifle this movement and will do whatever they can to do so--legally and illegally. One can bet that law enforcement agencies are watching film, reading leaflets, and reviewing photographs, internet posts, and police radio recordings in search of indictable criminal acts and possibly even conspiracy charges. We need to stand together or, as the saying goes, we will hang separately. This does not mean one must support actions s/he does not agree with, but when one needs to criticize, it should be done in the context of learning together and strengthening the movement birthed in Seattle. This movement has the potential to change the world we live in. We can't let that opportunity slip by.

Meanwhile, Back on Wall Street

While protestors clogged the streets of Seattle in opposition to the corporate cabal known as the WTO, another, even less democratic form of corporate control of our lives was approved in Washington. In what might be wrongly considered another Y2K glitch, the Federal trade Commission approved the merger of Exxon (formerly Standard Oil of New Jersey) and Mobil Oil. Now, for those of us who might need a refresher course in U.S. history, the original target of American antitrust laws was Standard Oil, which became the world's largest oil company by buying out or merging operations with other oil companies, including Mobil.

According to the two companies' chairmen, the merger is necessary in order for them to compete with other nationally-owned oil companies. What they didn't say was that they already own a large percentage of these various national companies in the countries that the United States purchases a good deal of its oil from--Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

What this deal is really about is monopoly. As anyone who has played that game knows, the person who ends up with the most blocks of properties can then charge ever higher prices for people to land on them. In the long run, this is what will probably happen here. We will be paying higher prices for petroleum products. Additionally, this new corporation will be able to challenge the Venezuelan national oil company, especially as that country's new socialist-oriented government realigns its priorities to help its people instead of the profits of U.S. corporations.

Despite the proclamations of various congresspeople who insist, as Rep. Joe Barton of Texas did, that "It is in the national interest of the USA to support this merger." it definitely is not. As the past several decades have shown us, doing the oil companies' beckoning is a certain path to further pollution, war, and eventual national bankruptcy. Their interest are not ours. It is time we let them know.

Speaking of monopoly, recent occurrences in the ice cream market have some folks here in Vermont a little upset. Ben & Jerry's is selling out. Those good guys of corporate capitalism are thinking of selling their company to a new corporation that was formed last summer when Nestle's and Haagen-Dasz merged. If this deal goes through, Ben and Jerry stand to make a lot of money, and the ice cream with the good guys' names on it will be making profits for Nestle's, subject of a decade long boycott for its practice of forcing women in developing countries to feed their babies formula instead of breast milk. This practice continued even after the formula was proven to be less healthy than breastfeeding. While many Ben & Jerry's stockholders are upset at this potential move, one wonders how many will go crying to the bank. What further proof does one need that the pursuit of ever greater profit leads one to deny human values? Capitalism demands accumulation and expansion and has little room for compassion. Even Ben and Jerry can't hold out. The proof is in the ice cream.

What's Next?

We need to continue linking the various aspects of the new world order: Links between the wars the big countries

(Continued next page)

Why No Labor Standards?

by Ron Jacobs

Why do foreign trade negotiators oppose labor standards? First off, one must remember that most of these men and women represent the elites in their particular country, not the ordinary citizens. That said, if such standards are imposed, the profits of their particular nation's elites will shrink. If they have to pay a living wage (which of course varies from country to country), their ability to undercut another nation's bid in the bidding wars for multinational sweatshops decreases. Unless, of course, they want to decrease their rate of profit--something no businessperson wants to do, whether they profiteer in one of the world's capitalist powers or just one their subsidiaries. Unsaid in this debate over labor standards is that the multinationals do not want any standards imposed, either. Otherwise, their ability to shop around for the best situation to exploit becomes more limited. In a way it's like the NBA individual salary cap in reverse--instead of a limit being placed on the maximum earning power of a player so that he will not just go to the highest bidder, thereby making it difficult for small market NBA teams to compete, world labor standards would equalize the playing field some for workers, thereby limiting (albeit minimally) the ability of corporations to maximize the surplus value they reap from their workforce.

Just Another Form of Imperialism

Mumia Abu-Jamal

If they [NGOs-Non-Governmental Organizations] are allowed to hijack the World Trade Organization talks, it will be a dangerous precedent that every government and every global company will regret long after the protests in Seattle."
-- Business Week magazine

.

The spectre of tens of thousands of workers, environmentalists, human rights activists and anarchists, seizing the streets of Seattle, was a stirring sight indeed. Their opposition to the antidemocratic, corporation-heavy World Trade Organization earned them the enmity of the corporate media, and the vocal condemnation of corporate politicians.

The WTO, the successor organization to the GATT-General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, functions as a virtual shadow government, in fact a Supergovernment, that rides roughshod over the national and state concerns seeking to protect the wages of workers, insure environmental standards, and protect

The length and breadth of capitalist corporation's control over the lands, resources, and labor of millions of people in the US and abroad (especially in the so-called Third World) makes the grievance of American colonists against the British look remarkably petty.

(Capitalism, continued)

fight and the economic practices they enforce need to be made. The connection between free trade and the increased imprisonment of so-called surplus populations and their use as prison labor needs to be emphasized. The connection between child and sweatshop labor and lower wages in the more developed countries has to be clarified, as does the link between the drive for profits above all else and the destruction of the earth's environment.

The Direct Action Network (one of Seattle's primary organizing networks) has put out the following:

*initiate an-ongoing network of groups fighting against capital-controlled government;
*coordinate communication through a representative council structure
*provide a clearinghouse of resources and a speakers' bureau;
*publicize radical visionary politics and culture; coordinate future collective direct actions and projects including May Day 2000; the North American Peoples' Global Action Conference; and a cross continental caravan of artists and revolutionaries.

Of course, other groups will also make their own plans for the future. No matter what, we must maintain the focus and solidarity achieved in Seattle. •

collective bargaining gains. To the extent that the WTO consists of a collection of governments, it in fact protects corporate interests: the primary interest of capital, over and above all other interests. In this context, the demonstrations were a welcome and powerful corrective, expressing the views of the many, not protecting the interests of the few.

Much can be said about the much-maligned anarchists that rocked the mid-city, by attacking the shimmering edifices of capital. The press leaped at the opportunity to call them "thugs," or "hooligans," who were involved in "violence." What is missing from the reportage, of course, is that those young folks attacked property, not other beings. Meanwhile, the state, through its police, attacked persons, kicking them, gassing them, beating them, and jailing them. What, one wonders, is the greatest form of "violence?" But, in the world projected by the corporationist media, state violence isn't real violence. Only individuals who are unaffiliated with the state can therefore be truly violent.

What madness!

John Cavanaugh, from the Institute for Public Studies, speaking at a public meeting in Seattle around the time of the demonstrations, likened the powerful anti-capitalist, anti-WTO demonstrations to another well-known act of violent civil disobedience that marked the beginning of the American Revolution. That act of Civil Disobedience is now known as the Boston Tea Party, where Americans demonstrated against the trade domination of the British, by blackening their faces (to hide their identity), dressing like Indians (to hide their ethnicity), and by destroying over 30,000 pounds of British Tea, by throwing boxes, bundles, and bales into the Boston Harbor.

Their lament? Taxation Without Representation.

To the Brits and their Tory sympathizers, this was the action of "thugs," "hooligans" and "ruffians," no doubt. But what did they contribute to the public spirit of resistance to the British Empire.

The length and breadth of capitalist corporation's control over the lands, resources, and labor of millions of people in the US and abroad (especially in the so-called Third World) makes the grievance of American colonists against the British look remarkably petty. The WTO is the unelected, privately-dominated body that undermines democracy by its very existence. They make the rules under which the world's vast economy is organized. And all must submit to this economic power, despite local, national and/or regional laws to the contrary. For the only "law" that they respect is the primacy of profit. Capital makes the rules; labor dances to their tune.

Consider, how very quickly (overnight in fact!) Seattle cops created what was termed a so-called "Protest Free Zone" in the very heart of a major American city, to "protect" the interests of foreigners, diplomats and businessmen, of some 50 square blocks! A "protest free zone," is by necessity, a "First Amendment-Free Zone," with the word "free" meaning as little as the term used in discussing "free trade." In what part of the United States does the U.S. Constitution not apply? In whose interest was this cordon sanitaire established? The citizens of Seattle, or the monied gentry of global capital.

Seattle revealed the faultline underlying the lie of the great economic "miracle" of the 1990s. It revealed the justifiable fears and anxieties at the heart of millions of American workers. It revealed who politicians work for. It revealed the nature of the police. It can, it should be, a beginning. •

WHERE TREASURES ABOUND BOTH GREAT & SMALL.
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• WINTER WOOLIES ARE IN
• EXQUISITE STERLING JEWELRY
RAMBLE IMPORTS & Oddities, Co.
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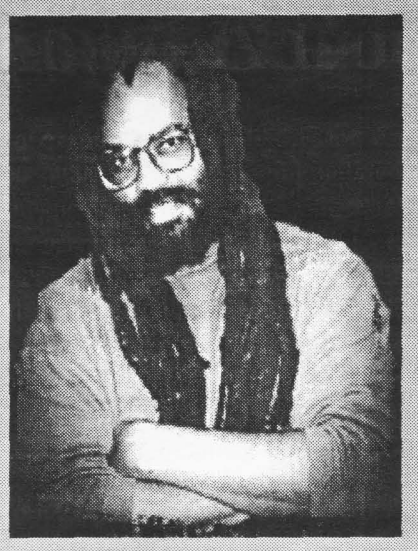
Olympia, Wa.
Next to Clancy's
(360) 357-7004



WHO IS MUMIA?

Mumia Abu-Jamal, a father, a son, a brother, an author and a former radio reporter and Black Panther was convicted of fatally shooting officer Faulkner and is now on death row. Recently, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected his final appeal based on previous Pennsylvania court rulings and Governor Ridge signed a death warrant.

WHAT'S THE STORY?

On Oct. 15, Attorneys for imprisoned journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal filed in federal court for a new trial alleging 29 violations of his constitutional rights. They have also submitted to federal district court judge William H. Yohn a 95-page memorandum of law. The memorandum documents the legal basis for each of the twenty-nine claims of constitutional violations asserted in Jamal's petition for a federal writ of habeas corpus.

The violations include: suppression of evidence by police and prosecutors, the coercing of witnesses, the fabricated "confession" story, the suppression of documents about police surveillance of Mumia, the ineffective defense counsel in Mumia's first "trial", how Mumia was NOT allowed to represent himself, how Mumia was BARRED from the courtroom in his own "trial", the state's use of ALL of its 11 peremptory challenges to STRIKE Black people from the jury, how the prosecutor used Mumia's involvement in the Black Panther Party to argue that Mumia should be executed.

After the judge gets all these papers, he will then set a date for the first major court appearance, at which time Mumia will be present. Thus Mumia's first court appearance could be in early March.

A complete copy of the memorandum and petition for Habeus Corpus is available at http://mojo.calyx.net/~refuse/mumia/index.html

WHAT NOW?

THE DEMAND FOR A NEW HEARING...

Mumia's attorneys request a hearing in the federal court to bring in the witnesses and evidence that were denied by Judge Sabo in the Pennsylvania courts. Getting this hearing is CRUCIAL! It will be BOTH the first AND last time Mumia can present this evidence in court. Only a new hearing can get the evidence of Mumia's actual innocence on the record!

WHAT CAN I DO?

We need EVERYONE to write to Judge Yohn and demand that he grant Mumia an EVIDENTIARY HEARING and send it to Mumia's attorney, Leonard Weinglass, so that we will have ALL of the letters from Mumia's supporters when it is time to go into court.

Address your letter to Judge Yohn as follows:
Judge William H. Yohn, Jr.
c/o Leonard Weinglass, Esq.
6 West 20th Street, Suite 10A
New York, New York 10011

The Beginning of the Global Revolution

Douglas M. Mackar

The protest of the World Trade Organization in Seattle was not only a physical protest in the street, it was an educational and intellectual protest as well. It was representative of a recent, massive, global effort by people united to educate themselves and others about the interrelatedness of all issues which effect our lives and the safety of the planet.

The key to revolution is education. To perpetuate a successful revolution, it is essential to understand exactly what it is that you are fighting for, and exactly what it is that you are fighting against. You must then be able to communicate these ideas to others, especially those you disagree with, and you must be prepared to offer a solution or a compromise.

The protest in Seattle provided the opportunity for all of this to happen. Efforts to educate and organize included workshops dealing with the history and policy of the WTO, alternatives to the WTO, the WTO's effects on fisheries, forests, public health, genetic modification, investment rules, toxins, wealth and income disparity in the U.S., international solidarity, labor rights and standards of living.

The Direct Action Network (whose goal was to prevent the meeting from occurring by blocking hotel exits, as well as street routes and entrances to the convention center) put on a series of workshops to prepare for the Nov. 30 direct action . These included trainings for non-violence, legal/jail solidarity, legal observers, first aid, puppet and banner making, simple climbing, drumming, low-tech blockades, street theater, basic info sessions on the WTO, communications, media, and radical cheerleading. Food, housing, and childcare were also provided.

The convergence which protesters organized leading up to and through the action was a beautiful example of how the people can successfully organize themselves without government aid, and on a frighteningly low budget.

In addition to these workshops, there were prayer gatherings, indigenous peoples networking, spoken word, music, a debate featuring Ralph Nader, John Cavanagh, and Vandana Shiva (anti-WTO) and Jagdish Bhagwati and Scott Miller (pro-WTO), and a group from California's Sonoma County called Plant Earth Activation who planted seeds among Seattle's landscaping with the hope that when the food came up, it would set an example for members of the community to continue such activity. They see community gardens as an alternative to corporate grocery stores that sell genetically engineered food, as well as providing "a positive alternative to empty lots and plastic/cement playgrounds as a place where children can learn and have fun."

The week of the WTO meeting also contained the celebration of "Buy Nothing Day"(Nov. 26), "World Aids Day," and "Women, Democracy, Sovereignty and Development Day" (Dec. 1).

While participating in blockades, marches and rallies, there was the unique opportunity to directly confront members of the WTO on the street, and to engage in conversations about world trade policies with individuals from all over the world who represent their respective countries on these issues.

The key to revolution is education. To perpetuate a successful revolution, it is essential to understand exactly what it is that you are fighting for, and exactly what it is that you are fighting against.

One minute you're linking arms with a stranger and blocking the entrance of a hotel, and the next minute you're attending a workshop on how to take the message of localization back to your community and educate your family and friends about the dangers of globalization. There were hundreds of activities that one could be involved in, in addition to supporting direct actions which specific groups were carrying out.

The Other Meetings in Seattle

The first major educational event during the week of the protest was the International Forum on Globalization's Teach-In on the WTO. It's goal was to educate people and provide them with the opportunity to engage in conversation about a wide range of issues that are affected by the WTO, and more specifically, the process of globalization.

The IFG views international trade and investment agreements, including the GATT, the WTO, Maastricht, NAFTA and the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), combined with the structural adjustment policies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, to be direct stimulants to the processes that weaken democracy, create a world order that is under the control of transnational corporations, and that devastate the natural world. The IFG is a unique organization that provides a diverse, broad range of analyses and form strategical alliances. They are dedicated to educating activists, policymakers, and the media about the negative effects of economic globalization and to advocating policies that are more equitable, democratic, and ecologically sustainable.

As Jello Biafra, activist and member of the Dead Kennedys, said at the People's Gala in Seattle on Nov. 29: "So far the best weapon the WTO has had is that hardly anybody knew it existed, let alone what is was for, and what the NAFTA treaty and the GATT treaty that created the WTO was for; so, what we've accomplished this week and what we will be accomplishing tomorrow [Nov. 30] is a very important first shot across the bow of the supertanker WTO...A shot heard round the world!"

Indeed, the WTO has been under international scrutiny for the past few months as more and more people are finding out exactly what the WTO represents. It is becoming increasingly obvious how the rulings of the WTO negatively effect individuals in all parts of the world- developing countries, industrialized countries, and especially indigenous cultures.

Both the current efforts to educate, and the promotion of localization rather than globalization, are creating a movement towards reversing the trends that the WTO has been promoting, which is the economic well being of corporations and the promotion of free trade. To many, this movement is destined to be successful.

As Mark Weisbrot, co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research in Washington, D.C., who holds a Ph.D in economics from the University of Michigan, stated at a press conference held in the Seattle Town Hall on Nov. 29: "Once this is a debate, they're really finished. I think that the WTO is not necessarily going to collapse tomorrow, but this next round I don't think is going to go anywhere because now it's an open process. Now people are aware of what they're doing and how it affects them. I think we need to continue this, and we need to do the same thing with the IMF and the World Bank, who most people in this country especially have still never even heard of.

"As recently as 7 or 8 months ago, there was going to be a protest here, but it wasn't necessarily going to be on the front pages of the New York times with long discussions of the issues involved...[The WTO] is antagonistic to the interests of democracy, and people everywhere in the world. Living standards. Environmental standards. It's a very simple message in a lot of ways. You don't really need to understand everything about the macro-economics, for example, to see what these institutions are doing that are all operating together...these institutions are not going to be abolished anytime soon, so we need to reduce the harm that they cause throughout the world, and I think there is the opportunity for that now."

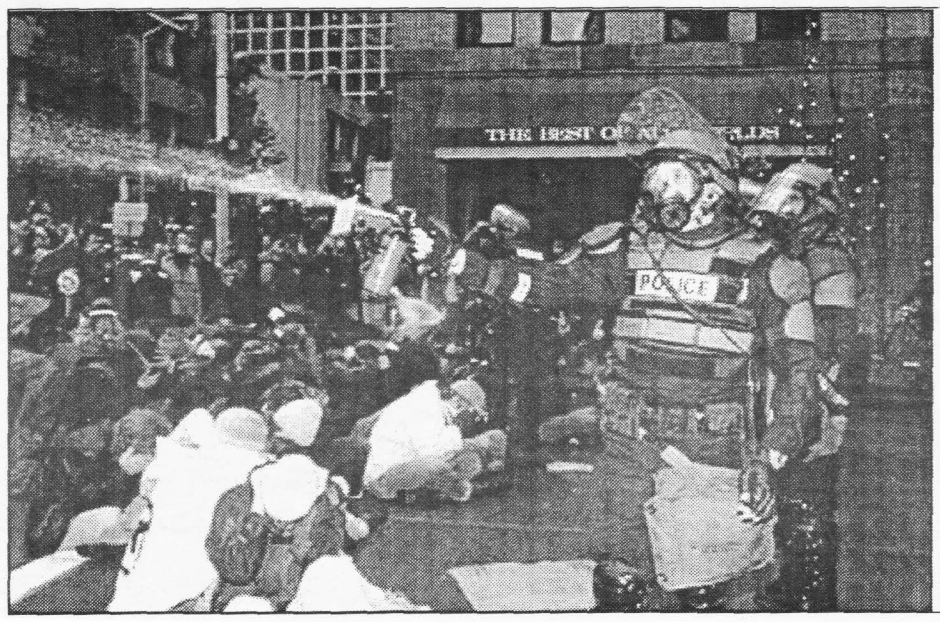
To take advantage of that opportunity is to take part in your local government. From protesters on the street to the director of the IFG, Jerry Mander, the message is clear- the next step, and the most effective way to fight the WTO and globalization, is to take the power into your own hands and begin to make permanent changes towards localization in your own community.

Rather than trying to tear down the oppressive structure that now surrounds us, we must build from within ourselves, our families, and our communities, and introduce that example to the world as one of success and inspiration. Community gardens, food co-ops, local currency and home-brewed beer are just a few examples of successful means of localization that are currently gaining attention across the U.S.

Creating a culture that is comfortable with and encourages localization will not be easy, but it is possible. And although their voices may not be dominating American politics right now, we are fortunate that there are those within our own government that agree with this strategy and are fighting for us every day in the House and the Senate.

Tom Hayden, Senator from California, said: "This is everything. This is your future...I find it unbelievable that I'm here as a State Senator to protest the

(Continued next page)



these photos by Indy-Media

(Global Rev., continued)

loss of California's sovereignty on all kinds of issues. I find it amazing because I accept the idea that politicians are sort of full of it, with big egos, and want power; then how can they be turning themselves into the puppets of the WTO and not notice the loss of local power, and state power? So we're going to join this effort to try to return democratic control and democratic decision-making to the grass-roots, to the local elected officials."

The church is another strong proponent of localization and social justice. On Nov. 29, I participated in an interfaith rally dubbed JUBILEE 2000 in which over 15,000 people marched to, and formed a human chain around, the Exhibition Center where the WTO was holding their opening reception, calling for the cancellation of Third World debt.

One man told me, "This is the biggest thing that's hit this city that I can remember, and we want to be a part of it as Christian men, basically ministering the word of God. As much as I know about the economy of the world and the people who have the money in the world, they are really interested in increasing their profits and too often not necessarily interested enough in the welfare of their hirelings- and God's against that- God's against mistreating your hirelings. And if any corporate people are out there, they need to know that God's not happy."

Other spiritual practitioners were also present in Seattle, not necessarily to protest the WTO, but to reach a large audience about a problem that also stems from government control and the abuse of human rights. Supporters and practitioners of Falun Gong, a spiritual practice based on ancient Chinese culture, took to the streets with petitions to begin a dialogue with the Chinese Government, urging them to respect the will of its people and end the brutal crackdown against Falun Gong practitioners in China.

Another group occupied an abandoned building in an attempt to call attention to negotiations with the landlord to turn the building into shelter for the homeless. This action was part of a larger campaign for the rights of the homeless of Seattle that also has ties with the arrival of the WTO (as well as the holiday shopping season). Of all the money that was spent by the city and the taxpayers in preparation for the meeting and in preparation for the police force to tear-gas and shoot at peaceful protesters, no money was spent on providing the homeless with a place to stay and food to eat.

In fact, more money was spent by Seattle police to rid the city of the homeless than to help them. Seattle police initiated a series of "street sweeps" to push the homeless out of the downtown area, out of the sight of the public, the visiting delegates, and of course, the media.

In response to this, a "tent city" was established where those individuals could live during the duration of the meetings. These "sweeps" and the public response against them are just one example of how the government literally pushes aside our society's problems, attempting to hide them rather than to deal with them. If they really cared about these people they would go out of their way to help them. The tent city is a great example of a community effort to solve problems, if only temporarily, and to take control on the local level, depending on ourselves before our government.

Seattle: "a pretty busy place" with "a lot going on"

It was widely known that Seattle was going to be "a pretty busy place" while the WTO was in town, and that there was going to be "a lot going on," but for me it proved to be more than that. It was a time when the people took responsibility to organize and educate themselves. A time when people of all backgrounds and special interests came together to work towards a common goal.

The point was to take in as much information as you could, so that when the protest was over and you returned home, you were prepared to participate in the governing of your town, your school, your workplace, your family. This protest changed people's lives, and in turn enlightened the Collective Unconscious. People saw that they as individuals could make a difference, and they decided that they would continue to make a difference when they returned home to their communities.

I talked to people who because of this protest finally saw clearly how simple decisions they make every day affect themselves and the lives of others in parts of the world they never knew existed. People were thinking about the clothes they wore, how the corporations were getting rich off them and exploiting workers' rights. People were thinking about where their food came from, how it was produced, and if it was healthy or not.

Many people left Seattle with a different mind set. They decided to choose not to consume. They decided to take part in local elections, even run in local elections. They decided to volunteer at community centers, childcare centers, food co-ops, or to adopt a dog from the pound.

The WTO protest in Seattle was a protest against the implementation of global policies without the consent or approval of the citizens of the world. The people proved that they would find their own truth, and they would teach those truths to others, rather than blindly consume "facts" that were handed to them by the WTO, governments and multi-national corporations.

I believe that the presence of the WTO in Seattle created the opportunity for people around the world to clearly see how the structure of power in our world works, provided the opportunity for all of us to realize our role in the re-structuring of this power, and allowed us to clearly see the direct connection that we all share as citizens of Earth.

I believe that a member of Global Exchange put it best when he said: "You are the power. We are the power. The people are the power...I think what we are seeing here is not about Seattle or the WTO, this is the beginning of the first global revolution ever." •

The Independent Media Center

Douglas M. Mackar

The Independent Media Center was created this summer in an effort to provide constant, non-biased coverage of the action in Seattle during the World Trade Organization meeting. It is an all-volunteer, collectively run media center operating as an alternative to corporate media and corporate institutions. It serves as a resource for pooling information, creating and distributing finished products, and delivering an accurate message to the public.

The IMC was located in a donated space in downtown Seattle. Journalists, film makers and photographers used the center as a base to work on their own projects, as well as organizing efforts to form a collective, multi-media website which was updated almost constantly in an attempt to provide the most accurate depiction of the events that were taking place. Television and radio broadcasts were delivered from nearby sights, and legal observers used the IMC as a communication center to keep updated about arrests and police activity.

Nightly meetings were held to insure that major events and actions would be covered by at least one media team. The teams consisted of audio, video and print personnel, and covered everything from workshops and music events to marches and direct actions.

The IMC also had its share of action. As Marge Buckley, member of the National Lawyers Guild, and a legal observer during the protest stated while barricaded in the Media Center: "The police have been pushing all the demonstrators down using teargas, stunguns, rubber bullets, and pepper spray. They came down and laid down their line directly in front of the Independent Media Center, and not only that, but they grabbed our table and they blocked our door. They threw tear gas canisters and also sprayed the inside of our door with pepper spray.

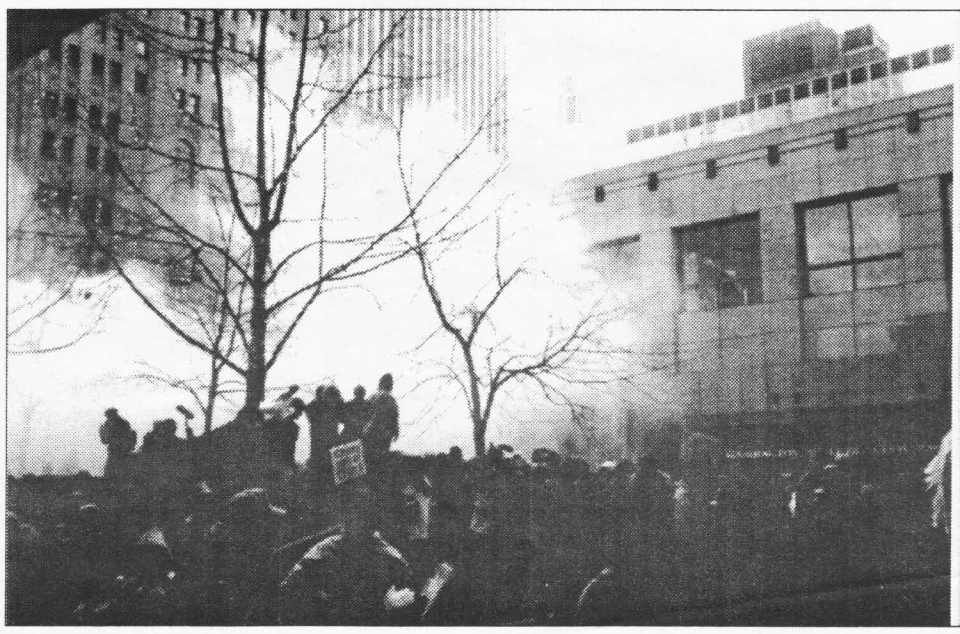
"I just heard from a volunteer that was supposed to come in that it's been announced on the air that there is a state of national emergency and there will be the National Guard here. At least we're inside. The demonstrators who are outside are being pepper sprayed and well, they're being tortured.

"I think you can go out the back door and see if you can leave, but the problem is after 7 o'clock there will be a curfew and when you have a state of national emergency they can shoot you if they find you on the street. I don't know if the assholes want to do that but as a lawyer who's been involved in these struggles for forty years, I can tell you that I don't put anything past them. I do not get shocked at anything they do. And since we at the "School of the Americas" have been training all the torturers for South and Central America, I guess our guys figure they've got a right to get in on the fun too."

For a short time there was the possibility that the IMC was going to be raided and the tapes confiscated. A representative of the IMC asked Michael Nelson of the Seattle Police, "What are we being charged for?" to which Nelson responded, "Well, at this point, I'm trying to find out."

Seattle was the perfect opportunity to put the IMC into action; it's probably the most documented protest in history.

As far as the future of the IMC, you can check their website- <www.indymedia.org> or look for them at your local neighborhood protest. Better yet, start your own Independent Media Center and spread the truth you see. •



these photos by Wendy Ortiz

these photos by Indy-Media

The Olympia Food Co-op -- A Good Place

Written by Ocean

The Olympia Food Co-op

Two spirals spin over each other in a hoop before an orange sun, hanging on a split strand like a stalk of grain. It almost looks like a northwest coast Native American design, though more abstract. This image stands on a post at the corner of Bowman and N. Rogers, and points to nothing less sacred than a community's food source. The spiraling icon is the Olympia Food Co-op's symbol, serving healthy food to the people of Olympia since the 1970's.

Out front of the west side co-op, bulletin boards are shingled with postings about housing, futons for sale, environmental issues, massage practitioners, yoga sessions, and upcoming musical events. On the other side of the walk, pots and soil (and seeds inside) are for sale for those who like to grow their own. Past the bike racks, the enormous free box lies under an overhang, sometimes an imposing mountain of old cloth, this morning someone has organized the shoes and clothes onto the shelves. Waste to waist. It is a chilly morning, but inside the swinging glass doors warm African music fills the floor. There is a rack of free information on current health, community, environment and political action issues. On the far side of the cash registers rests another rack of co-op owned books about health and food issues that has been accumulating for years. Behind the counter stand not paid employees, but volunteers. Briana Waters, a devoted environmentalist and animal rights activist, leans forward against the vintage register. Of working at the co-op, Briana says, "I like it a lot. Working at the co-op is stimulating and electrifying." Many of the volunteers here are jazzed and enthusiastic. Justin Solondz, another bright-eyed cashier, likes to put the big stuffed Orca whale from the kid's play area on his register while he is cashiering. "Working at the co-op is totally natural. What I mean by natural is that it's not like working for a boss. It is totally free and easy and fun. You're just hanging out, part of a group, and it's enjoyable. It's not like you're really working." The OFC is a highly volunteer-run business. Much of the work is done by working members who do everything from cashiering and stocking to opening and closing the stores (the new east side store is on Pacific by the freeway). The working member program helps to keep prices low, and in return volunteers are compensated with a 25% grocery discount. Working members are doing service work, filling roles to help feed the community. The co-op does employ a paid staff and has a board of directors, but it is a decentralized system of operation; there is no hierarchy, and decisions evolve through the staff collective through the consensus process.

Clearly OFC is more than just a natural foods grocery. It is a non-profit, member-owned cooperative, with a mission "to contribute to the health and well-being of people," and with a purpose to "strive to make human effects on the earth and its inhabitants positive and renewing and to encourage economic and social justice."

Clearly OFC is more than just a natural foods grocery. It is a non-profit, member-owned cooperative, with a mission "to contribute to the health and well-being of people," and with a purpose to "strive to make human effects on the earth and its inhabitants positive and renewing and to encourage economic and social justice." The co-op is more than even simply a co-op; it is a community hub and ethical sun.

Walking among the aisles of produce, snacks, deli sandwiches, and bulk grains and spices, there is more here than there appears. The co-op has product selection guidelines that consider all kinds of things. Is the item produced locally? Were the animals humanely treated? Is there a comparably priced organic option? Is it overly packaged? Are there any reasonable boycotts on the producer? These are the kinds of protracted questions considered around every item here. Sometimes issues are determined by member ballot, as when the membership decided to block products containing highly refined sugars, and sometimes the decisions are made in long staff meetings. On top of carrying organics, locals, and bulk, the co-op promotes low-impact environmental standards by recycling its food waste (compost) and by making clean used bags and containers available for bulk foods. Another consideration that comes into play is variety; not just a wide assortment of foods for a collage of palates, but a gradient of costs to cater to any economic situation. OFC intentionally carries low-priced foods so anyone can afford to eat. Their goal to "make good food accessible to more people" is also accomplished by making 10% discounts available for the poor, elderly and disabled. As well, the co-op generously kicks down food to the food bank, to volunteer service groups like Cascadia Defense Network, and to the Bread and Roses soup kitchen downtown. These low-impact standards spread through the network that the co-op inhabits by "framing the debate" into an architecture of sustainability, meaning that within the co-op there is a default to not apathy but to responsibility. All who come into contact with the co-op are immersed in all of these ideas that are non-corporate, non-exploitive, that are biologically and culturally conscious, that are consensual and productive.

The Olympia Food Co-op's offering of natural, whole and organic foods is ringed by a corona of community responsibility and biocentric morality. Stop by and have a sandwich. •

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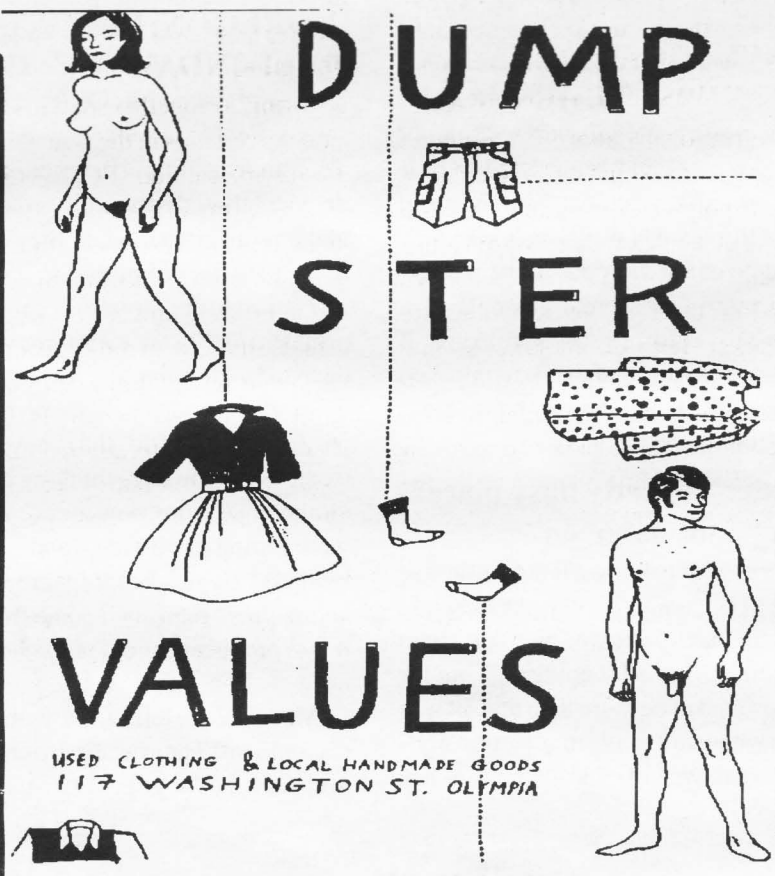

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Global Labor Update

The National Labor Committee

EL SALVADOR

1. POSSIBLE LIZ CLAIBORNE VICTORY

The National Labor Committee reports that, in response to pressure for reinstatement of the fired Doall workers, Liz Claiborne has:

1.) Called upon its contractor, Doall, to reinstate the 39 workers fired for organizing a union;

2.) Publicly commit itself to respect freedom of association and collective bargaining without repression or reprisals; and

3.) Agreed to verification by the Independent Monitoring Group of El Salvador, GMIES - and not by PriceWaterhouse Coopers.

The NLC and others are monitoring events closely. After consulting with the fired workers, CTS, SETDESA, CENTRA and other unions, human rights and women's organizations, the NLC has called off an emergency delegation of the NLC, People of Faith Network, USAS, New Economy Communications, UNITE and the Steelworkers, which was scheduled to arrive in El Salvador on Tuesday, December 14. The NLC also delayed plans for leafleting Liz Claiborne stores during the holiday season.

Should these moves by Liz Claiborne and Doall turn out to be a delaying tactic in order to get through the prime holiday shopping period, the NLC will respond with a national alert, leafleting of stores and the emergency delegation.

The Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) adds: "According to our partners in El Salvador, [Doall], the Vice President of Liz Claiborne and worker (union) representatives are currently involved in negotiations. The workers and organizers of the factory request that there be no international pressure on Liz Claiborne or the government of El Salvador regarding the firings while negotiations are going on. They are concerned that pressure could jeopardize these negotiations. As the discussions proceed, we may be requested to resume pressure. If the negotiations fail, international pressure will be crucial."

2. HEALTH CARE WORKER STRIKE CONTINUES:

As of December 10, tens of thousands of Salvadoran health care workers were continuing their (now 4-week) strike to protest planned privatization of the nation's health care system, which would result in deteriorated service and would smash the union. Using privatization to bust public sector unions, the strongest union sector in many countries, is a global strategy of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization. Destroying those unions would make it significantly more difficult to organize sweatshop workers in free trade zones.

For action suggestions, contact CISPES: (212) 229-1290, <cispesnatl@people-link.net>.

NICARAGUA

1. UNION VICTORY AT CHIH HSING:

The National Labor Committee reports that, after two union organizing drives were stopped through mass illegal firings, on the third attempt the workers won. Their union now has legal recognition and is affiliated with the Sandanista Worker Central (CST).

2. JEM III STRIKE DECLARED LEGAL:

The National Labor Committee and the Nicaragua Network [(202) 544-9355, <nicanet@igc.org>] report that, in an historic first in Nicaragua's maquiladora sector, a strike at the Jem III factory was declared legal by the Ministry of Labor. The 401 workers went on strike last week over a violation of work assignment policies. Management had fought to have the strike declared illegal and now will have to negotiate with the union. Jem III is a U.S.-owned factory headquartered in San Fernando, California.

It produces clothing for Wal-Mart.

3. INVESTIGATION BACKS WORKERS AT CHENTEX:

The National Labor Committee reports that an investigation by Nicaragua's national police confirms that 106 workers at the Chentex factory were victims of industrial poisoning in an incident which took place on November 15. After the workers fell ill -- choking, fainting and gasping for breath - the Ministry of Labor declared that the union workers had released tear gas and poisoned themselves. This absurd claim was thrown out by the national police, who investigated the factory and condemned its serious overcrowding and lack of ventilation.

Chentex produces garments for JC Penney.

HAITI:

GRAND MARNIER-LAPOSTELLE PLANTATION WORKERS

Batay Ouvriye, a worker organization in Haiti, requests international pressure on Novella Enterprises in Haiti and the Marnier-Lapostelle company in France in support of demands by the Haitian workers who pick the oranges and separate and dry the peel that is used to produce Grand Marnier, the famous cognac-based orange liqueur. Plantation workers barely make even the legal daily minimum wage of 35 gourdes (US$2). Pickers and peelers are paid at piece rate and must maintain a furious pace throughout the day to bring in enough to survive. The plantation lacks even the most basic toilet or washing facilities, creating special problems for the orange peelers, who suffer irritation to the hands and face from the citric acid juice.

Constant exposure to the acidic spray also causes respiratory and digestive problems. Workers can claim neither the sick leave nor the annual holidays mandated by Haitian labor law. The workers have formed a union. Negotiations with management have been unproductive. For action suggestions, contact the Haiti Support Group <haitisupport @gn.apc.org>.

U.S. FARMWORKERS

1. OREGON: REPORT ON CALL-IN DAY:

Bringing together students from several universities in the state, the Oregon farmworker union [PCUN: (503) 982-0243, farmworkerunion@pcun.org>] organized a protest outside the NORPAC growers' annual meeting, held December 7 on the campus of Oregon State University. To avoid a recurrence of earlier protests, the growers had gone to great lengths not to disclose the time, date or location of the meeting - to no avail. Meanwhile, calls, faxes and email flooded NORPAC headquarters - so

many that NORPAC eventually altered its web site in order to prevent email from "unauthorized sources." Thanks to all who responded to the alert!

2. FLORIDA: TOMATO WORKERS WALK-OUT OVER WAGES:

On December 13, hundreds of tomato pickers in Immokalee walked out to protest 20 years of falling wages in Florida's $500 million tomato industry. This was the third time in five years that area farmworkers have struck because of inadequate wages. They call for dialogue with the major tomato growers in southwest Florida to discuss wages and conditions. For action suggestions and more information, contact the Coalition of Immakalee Workers: (941) 657-8311, <CoaImmwkr@aol.com>.

3. NORTH CAROLINA: MT. OLIVE PICKLE BOYCOTT:

Since 1997, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) has been organizing migrant farmworkers who harvest cucumbers for the south's largest pickle company, located in Mt. Olive, NC. The union initiated a boycott in March of this year after company officials refused to negotiate a contract to improve wages and conditions for some 5,000 workers. To join more than 166 organizations which have endorsed the boycott of Mt. Olive pickles, contact FLOC at (419) 243-3456, <mferner@floc.com>

The National Labor Committee [NLC: (212) 242-3002, <nlc@nlcnet.org>]•

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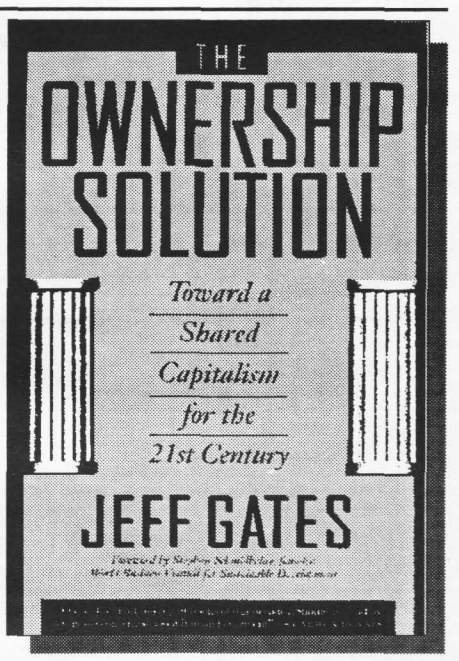
Book Review

Can "Sustainable Capitalism" be Acheived?



Dave Zink

***The Ownership Solution: Toward a Shared Capitalism for the 21st Century*, by Jeff Gates. (388 pp., 1998, Addison-Wesley Books, Reading, Mass.)**

"This Book May Save Capitalism!" At least that's what the poster said at the Sustainable America conference where folks were selling the book. Now, I am no fan of capitalism. My 22 years of work in the environmental sciences, in both military and civilian roles, has led me to the conclusion that capitalism is at the root of many problems. I'm quite willing to help escort it off stage to the nearest dark alley. Saving it isn't exactly on my list of priorities. But, ever curious, I read the book.

Jeff Gates (no relation to Bill) is the author. He spent almost a decade working for the U.S. Senate Finance Committee where he advised companies and governments by advocating and helping to initiate Employee Stock Ownership Plans. The founder of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development endorses Gates as a man who "knows what works and what can work. His experience has taught him that present forms of capitalism are unsustainable". He is an undogmatic thinker that's gathered an array of supporters ranging from Mario Cuomo, Coretta Scott King and Dick Gephardt to Ram Dass and Jack Kemp.

According to Gates, current business ownership, power, and control patterns reduce decision-making to the lowest common denominator: short-term profit maximization, at the cost of mounting social, political, cultural, economic, and environmental degradation. The widening gap between the haves and the have-nots is growing. Gates has the statistics to back up his contentions. According to the Congressional Budget Office, hardly a nest of radicals, the top 1% of US households has wealth exceeding that of the bottom 95%. Bill Gates alone owns more wealth than the 100 million Americans at the low end of the income scale. The Dow Jones might be booming, but Mary & Bob Jones aren't doing so hot. People feel alienated - left out and cut off - with good cause.

This polarization of wealth has deadly consequences. Frances Moore Lappe, author of *Diet for a Small Planet*, documents the correlation between concentrated ownership in agrarian economies in Latin America (in El Salvador, for example, 6 families own as much land as 300,000 peasants) and hunger, malnutrition, and infant mortality. The widening gap between rich and poor is accompanied by a widening physical and mental "health gap". This intensifies immigration pressure on the USA, as these people seek to escape from grinding poverty.

The owners of capital search the globe seeking the lowest wages and environmental and labor standards. Why? To drive down the costs of production and increase profits, any way they can. The World Trade Organization, set up to enforce the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and free trade agreements, makes it even easier for trans-national corporations to move finance capital around. In their game of world domination, they play one country off against another, creating a "global race to the bottom". We, the people, are the pawns, while the Trans-Nationals are the kings, queens, and rooks. Around the third world, from Chad to Chiapas, subsistence agriculture is being destroyed, forcing people off their traditional lands and into lives of urban squalor. Millions don't have the money to buy what they need. The corporations would rather destroy surplus commodities than give them away to those who need them. (Giving stuff away might cause prices to drop.) A commodity is any article produced primarily for sale and profit - utility is a secondary consideration. Corporations were created to more efficiently convert nature into commodities, and convert commodities into capital. This process is a defining characteristic of capitalism and a cause of it's many damaging effects.

The question today is: how can we take back our country from the un-elected mega-corporations that, step by stealthy step, have stolen it from us?

According to Jeff Gates, corporations respond to three types of feedback in making decisions:

1. Product pricing. Consumers "vote" for the best quality at the best (lowest) price.

2. Share Pricing. Capital markets "vote" by directing investment capital to firms with the most lucrative short-term financial returns.

3. Corporate governance. Managers are voted in or out by shareholders based upon how well they perform in maximizing corporate profits.

This feedback prioritizes short-term profit, which causes or aggravates labor, social, and environmental problems. With rare exceptions, things like environmental and community health are not even factored into corporate decision-making.

Capitalism is not about creating jobs or building better communities. It has a dynamic that has little to do with human needs or environmental sustainability. It has a lot to do with profit. Capitalism will create or destroy jobs, pollute air and water, build or destroy communities, depending on if it can make money in so doing. Transnational corporations owe allegiance to no country or community. The corporation of today is ethical. It operates on the ethics of gluttony. The ethics needed to run a sustainable society are alien to it.

But it's not productive to complain about Trans-National Corporations and the damage they're inflicting if you don't have something better to replace them with. We need to implement ownership and control patterns that support strong local communities of empowered people and halt the wasting of our resource base and ecology.

Gate's hypothesis: People are likely to become better stewards of all those systems of which they are a part - social, political, cultural, and natural - as they gain a sense of ownership, with all the rights and responsibilities that implies.

What is a "Capitalist"?

"The trouble with capitalism," Gates says, " is that it produces so few capitalists." Why is there such a low level of participation in ownership of the means of production and wealth creation ? Gates says that the main reason is that capitalism has a congenital birth defect: it is simply not designed to create capitalists, but to enrich existing ones. (Old sayings like "It takes money to make money" and "Your first million is the hardest" come to mind here.) "A genuinely sustainable capitalism must be engineered so that, by its very operation, it steadily expands the ranks of those who can rightly be called capitalists."

Here's where I think Gates get a little off track. Does owning a few shares of stock in a corporation make one a "capitalist"? If that's all it took, then many of us would already be capitalists. No, it takes more than that. Small shareholders don't count for much in the capitalist power structure. A capitalist can live off her investments, although she may put in quite a bit of time at nonproductive activities like playing the stock market. But if you either have to work, or try to make ends meet on unemployment, welfare, or pension checks, you're in the working class.

What is "Surplus Value"?

Capitalism is also a social relationship: one cannot be a capitalist unless one has employees working for him, creating wealth in the workplace. Workers create more wealth by their labor than they receive in salaries or wages. (If you didn't, you'd soon be out of a job!) This difference is called "surplus value", which the capitalist keeps, and is the primary source of profit, capital - and power. On November 12th, the U.S. Department of Labor reported that average productivity of American workers rose at a 4.2% annual rate from July to September, 1999. Did you get a raise? Probably not, since in this same period, labor costs for U.S. business rose only 0.6%.

The expropriation of surplus value for private gain of the owner of the means of production, instead of gain to the producers of the wealth, is the essence of capitalism, and is what meaningfully and concretely defines "capitalist". This is why jobs are exported to places with much lower prevailing wages. Gates doesn't discuss this in his book.

Three Ways to Democratize Corporations

Thomas Jefferson said that democracy could prosper only if founded upon widespread ownership of the economic means of life. The question today is: how can we take back our country from the unelected mega-corporations that, step by stealthy step, have stolen it from us? Gates advocates spreading ownership out to greater numbers of people as the way to foster "connectivity" to the social, economic, and ecological activities of which we are part. He discusses three ways to broaden the ownership of resources and the means of production and distribution:

1. Employee Ownership Solutions, ranging from Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs) to worker cooperatives - the "highest manifestation of self-government". Workers get more of the wealth they create and, as they begin to realize they own the place, often rightfully demand a share in power and responsibility. In co-ops, workers elect the board and management. Growing evidence reveals a high correlation between productivity and the level of participation in worker-owned business.

Gates enthusiastically promotes worker ownership and control as a way to strengthen and stabilize local communities. Worker-owned firms tend to be much more rooted in the community. Unlike absentee-owned businesses, they don't easily shut down and run off to chase higher profits elsewhere.

2. Customer Stock Ownership Solutions, in which money the customers pay in bills to utilities like power or cable TV companies builds up equity (ownership) in the company.

3. General Stock Ownership Solutions. Ownership is based upon citizenship in a geographic area or bio-region. This may prove to be an ideal mechanism to reflect the tribal ethic embraced by many Native Americans. Grassroots citizen's organizations have an important role to play in transforming the corporation as it exists today into new forms that allow better stewardship of the environment and communities in which they operate.

I see similarities between Gates' concept and the Populist movement, which led to the trust-busting of the early 20th century. This movement sought a return to an earlier, pre-monopoly stage of capitalism. Teddy Roosevelt's administration broke up some giant corporations, but didn't fundamentally change the corporate system. Corporations have a natural tendency toward combination as a way to cut labor costs and redundancy. This concentrates wealth and power into fewer and fewer hands of the

(Continued next page)

(Book Review, continued)

already rich and powerful. Today, we have the Software Trust (Microsoft). Many companies are thumbing their noses at the seldom-enforced anti-trust laws and re-combining. Recent examples include the merger of Exxon with Mobil and of Cargill with Continental Grain. If all we do is break up ownership and spread it out, what will prevent the process from repeating itself? Fundamental change, not tinkering, is needed - something that capitalists have naturally been very reluctant to consider. Why not transform these environmentally destructive mega-corporations into earth-friendly, democratic, and less wasteful operations?

In its performance regarding the environment, Gates likens the emerging corporate globalism to a child, obliviously playing with razor blades and badly in need of parental guidance. From where is that "guidance" to come? There is one force that has the potential power to stand up to and counter the dictates of corporate finance capital: "a newly energized and visionary labor movement, empowered by the rights and responsibilities of ownership." Labor unions need to get beyond their traditional focus on winning better wages for their members. They need to get serious about advancing worker ownership and democratic management of corporations, and build stronger links with grassroots environmental organizations. All this would revive the sense of solidarity on which the labor movement was founded. Organized labor has gained valuable experience through years of dealing with corporate bosses and their methods of deceit and intimidation. Unions have learned to see through corporate subterfuge and chicanery. Environmental groups would be more effective if they learned and applied some of these lessons. Labor - environmentalist unity is crucial to the success of both movements.

"But the need is not for yesterday's near-sighted labor agenda," Gates continues. To remain effective in fighting for the interests of workers and their communities, we need to develop the vision to see what is possible and organize to win it. The era of a permanent job with one employer is over for most workers. Unions must adapt to the revolutionary changes brought by technology, and adopt innovative strategies. The manufacturing sector, long the bastion of labor unions, is shrinking in America, as corporations shift these jobs to Indonesia, Latin America, China - places where workers face brutal conditions, receive much lower wages, and are fired, imprisoned, beaten, and/or killed for trying to organize unions. Gates emphasizes that "Workers of all stripes have never needed unions more than they do now." This is doubly true of workers in the third world. If corporations can freely cross borders to exploit child labor and destroy fragile ecosystems, then unions must develop an international strategy and cross borders to help organize the unorganized. Workers in America will benefit when workers in the third world stand up for their rights and successfully organize for better wages and working conditions.

The work of groups like the National Labor Committee (NLC) in promoting and defending the rights of workers in Latin America and Asia is crucial. [See the article on the NLC in this issue of *Works in Progress*].

With vision, our struggles can take on a dynamic that will transcend the limitations of capitalism and create a more sane economic system. Conversion of corporations into networks of democratically managed cooperatives, would bring about a profound and lasting "ownership solution", but in so doing would also transform capitalism into a form of socialism. The ruling class won't cheerfully give up its power and privileges without a strong and well-coordinated demand that it does so, and even then we can expect their hired goons to make things tough. History has shown that the corporate owning class will resort to fascist methods if it feels threatened. It will take a determined movement to establish a new framework. This is revolution, not tinkering around at the edges.

Labor unions need to get beyond their traditional focus on winning better wages for their members. They need to get serious about advancing worker ownership and democratic management of corporations, and build stronger links with grassroots environmental organizations.

Is there a savior waiting in the wings? Maybe, but we'd better not waste time waiting for her. Better to develop our own muscle through our own organizations - unions and cooperatives - and empower ourselves.

So why don't employees just get together, pool their money, and buy out their companies? There is a problem - a big one - with this idea. Gates calls this notion "Marie Antoinette capitalism". Instead of "Let them eat cake", its "Let them buy shares". Most people have no realistic chance to buy their way into the class of major corporate shareholders. Our paychecks are already badly-stretched. We're too busy "competing against each other for an ever-dwindling number of well-paid jobs". Gates could have mentioned that, due to the systematic theft of the surplus value produced by labor, the working class has already paid, several times over, for its rights to collective ownership and control of the workplaces.

Another problem is that when just a few corporations become employee-owned, they are forced to play by the same rules as the competition. The typical structure of corporations is anything but democratic. They are oligarchies. The more shares one has, the more votes. Usually they are much more competitive and aggressive than worker-owned business. For Gates' ideas to work, we will have to have a broad, well-coordinated transition process from plutocracy to democracy, or the few worker-owned companies will be left hanging out to dangle in the cutthroat dog-eat-dog corporate world. Ask a member of a cooperative and she'll affirm that islands of economic democracy awash in a sea of corporate sharks have a pretty rough time of it.

Indeed, some of the examples of success that Gates points to are not isolated individual firms, but are regional in scope. One example that Gates points to is northern Italy, where local government has provided tax and other financial incentives to aid the development of cooperatives. "The most interesting aspect of Italian co-ops is not their financial engineering, but the social impact that accompanies it." Gates contrasts life in the cooperative communities of northern Italy, with the more hierarchical communities in southern Italy. He finds that when people have highly developed overlapping networks of reciprocity and solidarity, things change. There is less reliance on the police. Public safety and order are results of people exercising respect and self-discipline. There is a strong correlation between more egalitarian relationships and civic participation. "Citizens tend to deal more fairly with one another and expect fair dealing in return." Co-ops tend not to invest in speculative ventures, but instead seek to serve human needs.

Some leftists advocate the abolition of the market system. Gates says that, due to human nature, the market is here to stay. We've all been raised in a capitalistic culture, after all. I think that the truth lies somewhere in the middle. The need for a market system, combined with democratic planning, to assure that the economy is responsive to people's wants and needs, is likely to remain for quite a while. Until a cooperative-based transition period educates us to the point where the market is no longer necessary, and we, or our grandchildren, are ready for the next step forward in social evolution.

Gates draws examples from around the world to back up his premise that wherever it has been given a fair trial, worker and community ownership works in helping people out of poverty and alienation. The concept fits well in many different societies, ranging from Islamic villages, where proponents seek to build a "Brotherhood of Co-Owners", to predominantly Catholic Latin America, where it harmonizes with core social values, to China, where it meshes well with ideals of social equality.

He describes one experiment in China, at a Zhu Chen Electrical Equipment Company, a 300-employee generator manufacturing firm. In 1993, the plant's workers acquired state's interest. Within a year, sales had risen by 80%. The local government, encouraged by this success, then began to engineer employee buyouts of 250 other firms. Worker-owned firms are clearly more dynamic and innovative than state-owned ones. In 1995, the concept of worker-ownership received Beijing's blessing as being fully consistent with socialist ideology, where "employees become masters of the enterprise". Time will tell whether this will work to help the People's Republic get back to its founding principles - "socialism with Chinese characteristics".

China certainly has its work cut out for itself. The sweatshops that Wal-Mart and other corporations use to produce clothing, toys, and other commodities are very exploitative of workers. If socialist ideology was truly in the driver's seat in Beijing, would China allow brutal sweatshop conditions? Gates doesn't discuss the clash between these two opposing forces in China.

Gates could have added that lots of American's pension funds are invested in WalMart. What do we get for it? Lots of closures of small, family-operated businesses. Instead of 100,000 people having $500,000 each, we have one Arkansas family, the Waltons, with $50 billion or so. We also get sweatshops, which depress wages in other consumer industries worldwide. We need to get more out of our pension funds than just ownership of shares. To clean up operations like WalMart, we need to organize for some decision-making power to go make that ownership real.

One notable weakness of this book is that Gates takes the command-economy model of socialism, ala the USSR and China, as representative of socialism in general, then rejects the whole idea of socialism as a failure and counterposes a "shared capitalism" as a better alternative. I question the validity of this. For one thing, the USSR and China emerged from czarist and feudal societies, with little experience with democracy. The conditions that these countries faced from birth - embargo, military harassment from Britain, the USA, Japan, and other hostile powers, a low level of technological development, etc. led to attempts to build socialism under siege conditions. In Russia, this inevitably led to distortions such as a security state and ruinous military spending. Under these circumstances, about the best they could do was build a form of bureaucratic state capitalism. Socialism without democracy is no socialism at all. If, and when, we have our North American revolution, we will face a very different situation than the Soviets. What country would risk military adventure against a North American Cooperative Commonwealth? More likely, our revolution will quickly spread to Canada, Latin America, Europe, and Japan. Socialism was never designed to succeed in isolation. It is only on a world level that a truly socialist society can become a reality.

If capitalism has any chance of long-term survival, if it is to be spared from a well-deserved crashing and burning, dying from its own contradictions, then it will be along lines close to what Gates sketches out in this book. But it will be a capitalism so transformed that we will hardly recognize it as such. If enacted, this would indeed be "capitalism with a human face". Many on the Left would welcome these changes, since they meet the defining criteria of participatory economic democracy. This is a book that many, especially doctrinaire socialists, would benefit from reading. •

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Thanks From Books To Prisoners

by Vincent P. Martinez

Chris Carson

As we sit on the threshold of a new year, Books to Prisoners, Olympia support group would like to take a moment to look back at 1999 and thank all who helped.

- First we would like to thank Left Bank Books and the new Society Educational Foundation who sponsor our program.
- All the Books to Prisoners (B to P) volunteers who give so generously of their time.
- Everyone who donates books, funds, and other help.
- The friends of B to P volunteer Dave Johnson, who in his memory have selected to pay our rent for one year. Their monthly donation allows us to buy more stamps, something Dave would be very pleased with. He had become so committed to helping that he would even come in after his cancer/chemo treatments to work.
- Stormans, Inc and all who donate Ralph's Thriftway and Bayview receipts by dropping them off at our work place or mailing them. The one percent we receive really helps a lot.
- Special thanks to Elsie, our faithful fairy godmother, who without fail picks up receipts, tallies, and turns them in in timely fashion, often leaving a tasty trail of homemade goodies for volunteers and always needed stamps along her way.
- Dumpster Values (117 Washington Street NE in downtown Olympia) that has transformed their free box into a fundraising box for B to P.
- The Olympia Food Co-op who provides space for a book donation drop off. In early November, they also surprised us with an unsolicited, but very much needed, financial donation from their 1999 profits. We were at a critical low point; wrapping paper, shipping funds and other basic operational supplies were nearly exhausted. Thanks to the generosity of the Board, staff, volunteers, members and all who shop at the Co-op we were able to get back on our feet.
- Progressive, social-political-economic author, lecturer and analyst Michael Parenti, the Washington Public Employees Association and all who made the February benefit at the Capital Theater a success.
- The Olympian newsroom who regularly donates books sent to them for review.
- Jeanie of TESC Bookstore who has taken over Marda's "job" of keeping an eye on the CAB B to P book drop by their door for us and giving us a call when it's full.
- The support of the TESC graduating class of 1999.
- Tara and those who helped make the third annual Sex Workers Art Show yet another successful benefit.
- To all the local independent bookstores: Browsers', Budd Bay, Tillikum, and Orca, it's great to have you as a part of our community, keeping the economy of barter alive. (An option you won't find available at the nationwide commercial book chains.) A special thanks to Orca for allowing B to P to order with trade credits for dictionaries, GED, and other much needed books at a 30% discount. (Additional credits at Orca are always needed. You can donate your trade credits to B to P's account there anytime.)
- Thanks to Yo-Yo A Go-Go, Grace Cox and all who have invited us to table at their events in 1999.
- And a tremendous thank you to *Works In Progress* for making the Books to Prisoner Page available and helping to raise consciousness about the ever growing prison industrial complex.

Books to Prisoners January Events

- Open drop in work/training sessions every Thurs. 3-9 pm in the back of the business formerly known as Bulldog News. *Training takes 1 hour. Once you are trained you can work anytime we are open.*
- **BTP Volunteer Potluck** - 3rd Sun. of the month, 3 pm at 116 E. 4th Ave, Olympia
- Turn in Bayview and Ralph's receipts. B to P receives 1%. Please send to the address below.
- **Save UPC code from Western Family Products &** send to B to P, 116 E 4th Ave, Olympia, WA 98501

Inmates — All correspondence to Books to Prisoners *must* go through the main branch:

Books to Prisoners
Left Bank Books
92 Pike Street
Seattle WA 98101

Your Help Is Needed

Because of the huge number of letters Books to Prisoners - Olympia Support Group receives each month and its limited resources, requests often wait many months to be filled. Thousands of letters still remain in boxes. Your help and generosity are urgently needed.

If we desire individuals in this country's prisons to be caring, thoughtful and sympathetic, then we too need to be caring, thoughtful and sympathetic. We need to "walk the talk." Please donate your time, money or books.

In greatest demand are:

English, Spanish/English, Southeast Asian dictionaries, thesaurus, new almanacs, and GED books.

Frequently requested are:

African-American, Chicano/Latino, and Native American history and progressive U.S. history.

Please donate:

- Any other good books
- Stamps and stamp money
- Money for tape, wrapping paper, and copying

Please bring donations of books to the Books to Prisoner-Olympia office at the business formerly known as Bulldog News at 116 4th Ave in downtown Olympia

Please make checks payable to Books to Prisoners.

Hours: Currently, the business hours are from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm daily. After hours donations possible by appointment. Please call the message phone below and leave a message.

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NO WAR

(Transit, continued)

Capital on the first day of session. We are asking legislators to make up for some of the funding transit agencies lost due to I-695.

So ask for the day off now, clear your social calendar, and find a friend - come to the Capital on January 10. If you can't make it, call your legislators that morning.

An educational forum and rally preparation party will be held on Friday, January 7th at 7pm in a new cojmmunity organizing center, whose entrance is in the alleyway across from Orca books on 4th Ave. in downtown Olympia.

More details to come! Call 206-298-9338 or e-mail <jackieb@transportationchoices.org>. For more information about this rally, you can also call Mitch at 956-9235, or <apt@graffiti.net>.•

Briefs, continued

grim satisfaction in their sure reward---which is being who and what they are. That's as terrible a reward as any I could imagine. I know who and what I am. I am an Indian---an Indian who dared to stand up to defend his people. I am an innocent man who never murdered anyone nor wanted to. And, yes, I am a Sun Dancer. That, too, is my identity. If I am to suffer as a symbol of my people, then I suffer proudly. I will never yield."

Leonard Peltier From "Prison Writings: My Life Is My Sun Dance"

Anti-Globalization News

Other upcoming events that the group is working to help organize for are the following:

March 25-27: Boston, MA; Biodevastation Four

Teach-ins and actions to counter the BIO 2000 conference (a bio-tech conference for the entire biotech industry)

April 9-17: Washington, DC; World Bank IMF meetings

The same groups that organized Seattle want to do the same thing in DC for the World Bank IMF meetings.

May Day Actions: Shut down Wall Street, the Board of Trade in Chicago and the Pacific Stock Exchange in San Francisco.

Local Anti-WTO Website

Check out this local website and see what your friends' and neighbor's experiences were at the WTO demonstrations: <www.olywa.net/dynamo/wto_sucks/r_eyes.html>. Send your account of your own experiences and pictures to <dynamo99@home.com>. Thanks Mike!

Internships at the National Labor Committee (NLC)

ORGANIZATION: The National Labor Committee is a non-profit labor and human rights advocacy group organization that works on behalf of human and labor rights in Central America, Asia and elsewhere. Our primary purpose is to promote greater public awareness of labor injustices confronted by workers in the Americas and to promote international worker and human rights principles as a means of giving people greater opportunities to improve their living standards.

Through establishing long-standing working relationships with non-governmental, human rights, labor, and religious organizations, primarily in Latin America, the NLC puts a human face on the worldeconomy. So far, the NLC has:

* Won an amendment conditioning every cent of U.S. foreign assistance on respect for worker rights;

* Won an unprecedented agreement with the GAP to allow independent human rights observers entry into contractor plants producing clothing for the GAP in order to monitor working conditions;

* Exposed labor rights violations in a Honduran factory producing Kathie Lee Gifford Clothing for Wal-Mart, causing a public stir that prompted several major retailers to adopt more stringent inspection standards for their contractor plants.

* The NLC helped to create true independent monitoring of factories by groups in El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Mexico. We will continue to push for legitimate and accountable monitoring and a living wage for workers.

Our campaigns demonstrate that a small nonprofit organization working with a network of concerned citizens and activists can successfully challenge multi-billion dollar corporations.

JOB DESCRIPTION: Internships offer a unique opportunity for students interested in the non-profit sector to learn about strategy, labor and worker rights, human rights, and working with other local, national, and international organizations. Internships vary and can be tailored to suit the needs and interests of specific students. Positions are offered in office management, research, web design and outreach. Scheduling can be worked out on an individual basis, a minimum of three full time days is required. Internships are non-paying. Travel expenses can be reimbursed.

QUALIFICATIONS/SKILLS REQUIRED: Interns should have excellent writing, research (including on-line research), and communication skills. Computer literacy is a must. Office skills are recommended. Interest in the non-profit sector, labor and human rights, and/or fundraising is a plus. Interns should be able to initiate their own projects and to work independently. Projects need to be mutually beneficial both for the advancement of the organization and for the advancement of the intern's education and contribution to the anti-sweatshop movement.

CONTACT: Please fax a detailed cover letter of interest and resume to Ms. Mieke Vandersall at 212-242-3821, or call 212-242-3002 for more information. Our web site is <www.nlcnet.org> See what students have said about their internships at<internstalk.htm>.

Mobilizing against the World Economic Forum

From January 27th to February 1st 2000, the 30th World Economic Forum (WEF) will take place in Davos in the Swiss Alps. 2000 self-proclaimed "Global Leaders" will meet in the relaxed atmosphere of the winter resort to establish informal contacts between the economic lobby and political management, to draw up billion-dollar projects of exploitation and prepare far-reaching decisions over the heads of those affected. Founded in 1971, the WEF now has become one of the most important "think tanks" of the economic strategists of the North.

After the failure of the Millenium Round in Seattle the meeting in Davos will have a special significance. The WEF could come to the rescue. In the eighties already the WEF provided the decisive input to the Uruguay Round of GATT. These negotiations led to the founding of the WTO in 1995.

The summit in Seattle was a debacle for the WTO, a spectacle for others. The tensions between the power blocs that had cropped up in the lead-up could not be solved at the ministerial conference in Seattle. In addition, the massive protests by opponents of the WTO on the spot led to delays that further reduced the options of the government representatives. In the end they did not agree on an agenda for the Millenium Round.

On its web pages the WEF shows how the problems of the world can be dealt with in a few sentences. What would happen if not everything went so smoothly in Geneva, Cologne and Seattle or in Davos? If the high-handed "global leaders" were compelled to notice that they cannot manage things as they please... After all it could be that in Davos, which will be in the limelight during those days, resistance will stir. It could be that many people show that they do not agree with a world as defined by WEF, IMF, WTO and the World Bank. The demonstration will take place on 29 January 2000 in Davos; meeting point train station: 3 pm.

Anti-WTO Coordination Switzerland c/o Reithalle Bern PO Box 5053 CH-3001 Bern Switzerland Tel ++41-31-302 66 60; Fax ++41-31-302 78 74 e-mail: <anti-wto@reitschule.ch homepage: <http://www.reitschule.ch/reitschule/anti-wto

For more information on WEF see their web site: <http://www.weforum.org>

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Tenant Talk

Mold spores are a common problem in the Northwest and they can cause a health hazard. About 29 percent of the general population is allergic to mold and mildew. When mold appears it sends spores floating throughout the home. Those with allergies will experience discomfort even if only exposed to a tiny amount of spores and the more that they are exposed, the greater the allergy becomes. Usually mold is caused because of structural problems with a building although it can be exacerbated by housekeeping styles. If the tenant is not responsible for the creation of the mold, it is the landlord's duty to cure the underlying problem.

The first step with any repair or infestation issue is to notify the landlord in writing of the problem. The landlord should begin making the necessary repairs within 10 days unless the situation is so dire that it is immediately hazardous to your health. In those situations the landlord has to take action within 24 hours.

If the landlord does not take action, you have several alternatives. The first option is to notify him that you are terminating your lease or rental agreement for his failure to make the necessary repairs. You need to give your landlord the appropriate amount of time to initiate the repairs, but if he doesn't take any action, you can notify him in writing that you are terminating the agreement and move out. You should be entitled to a refund of any pre-paid rent.

If moving doesn't fit your plans the other options may not be much better. A tenant has the right to pay for the repairs and then deduct them from next month's rent. If the repairs necessary to fix the mold problems exceeds one month's rent, you can do a rent escrow account, but this is a very complicated procedure and requires the certification of the premises substantially endangers the tenants' health or safety. Before doing a rent escrow, I suggest you meet with an attorney and discuss all the requirements necessary to ensure that you don't expose yourself to a three day pay or vacate.

The final remedy is to take your landlord to court and sue him for the diminished rental value of your premises. When you rented your apartment, your expectation was that the money you paid for rent guaranteed you a safe, weather-tight, sanitary dwelling. After some time you realized that you had not rented such a place, and the diminished value is recoverable. For example, if you rent is $400 a month but the actual rental value is only $200 because of mold infestation, then you are entitled to a $200 per month reimbursement for each month after the landlord became aware of the defect. That is why it is so important to give the landlord written notice (and keep a copy for your records) at the very outset of the problem. The problem with this remedy is that it doesn't solve the immediate problem of having mold in your residence.

The fact is that there are no good options for a tenant in this situation unless you can move and then sue your landlord for diminished rental value.

Problems with your landlord?

Call the Thurston County Tenants Union hotline at (360)357-0615 or come by our monthly public legal clinic on Monday, January 10th at 6pm in the downtown Olympia Library.

Information in this article comes from Legal Action Center column in Real Change newspaper.

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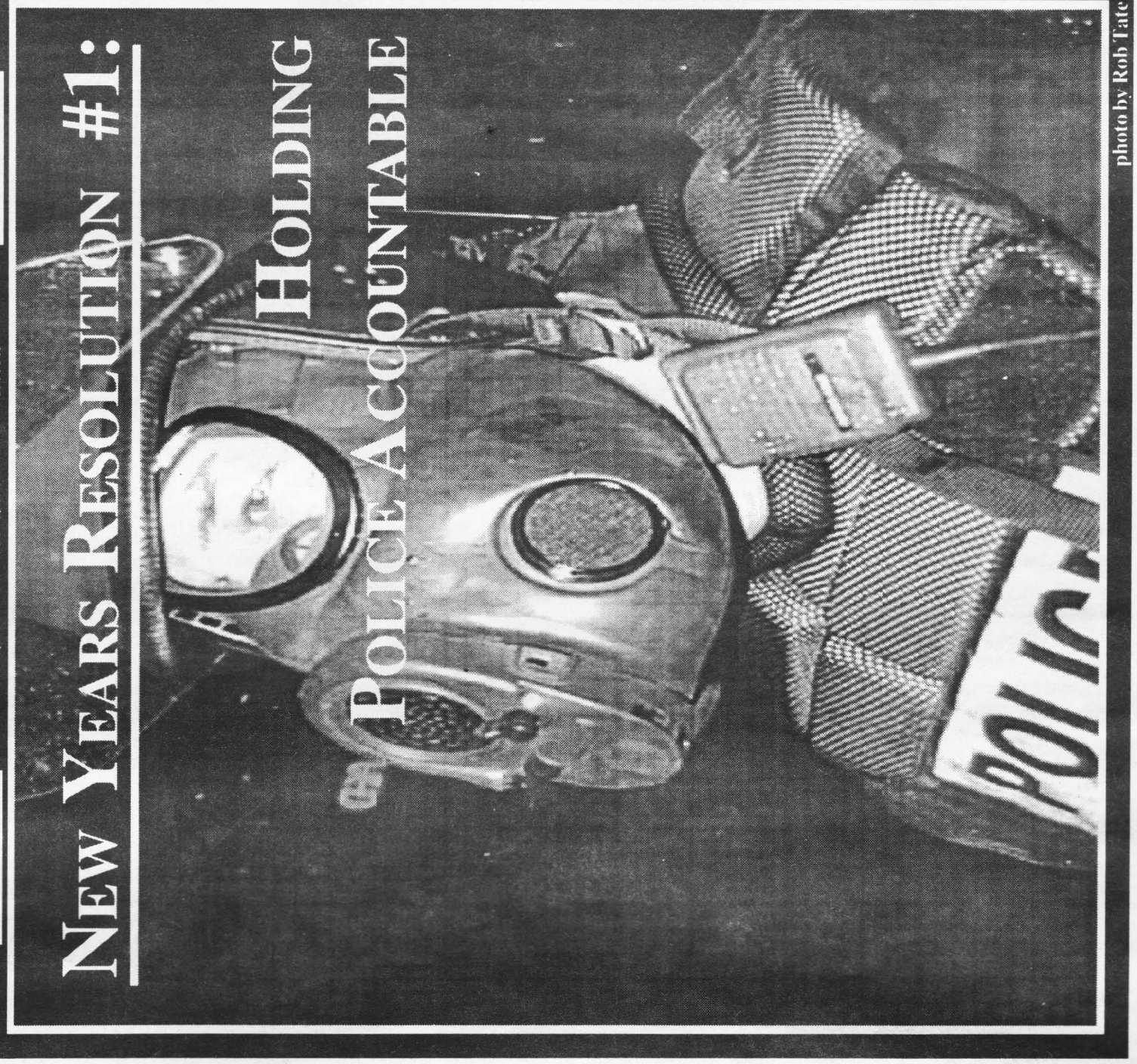

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